

Section 5  
Sh. No.  
Serial No.

# FORTY YEARS \* AMONG THE WILD ANIMALS OF INDIA

FROM

Please handle with care fully

## MYSORE TO THE HIMALAYAS

BY

F. C. HICKS

LATE DL. CONSERVATOR IMPERIAL FOREST SERVICE

VOL. II.



With 158 Illustrations, 88 Photos, 45 pen-&-ink sketches and 25 sketch-maps  
(103 full-paged and 67 Coloured-Plates)

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MADRAS

1911





LATE MRS. F. HICKS,

*Daughter of the late Captain Stephen Gordon Prendergast, of Johnstown, Kilkenny.*

**THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE BELOVED MEMORY OF MY WIFE** to whose constant devotion—through sickness, accidents and dangers of a forest life in India—I owe my life on many occasions. We nursed me single handed through an attack of cholera and again single handed right out in the wilds when I was terribly mauld by a tigress—through the bitter frost of January, and through the opposite extreme of terrible heat of March, April and May in tents during which period I was in too critical a state to be moved. Who throughout her married life of over thirty years with me, *non oia* left me to go on to the "Hills" much less "Home"—on any pretext whatever—insisting steadfastly throughout on doing what she held to be the duty of a "Wife" to follow and share at all times the burden of her husband, despite the loneliness of his life in the endless forests—though the "earth be like iron and the sky like brass"

"A true woman and a true Wife"



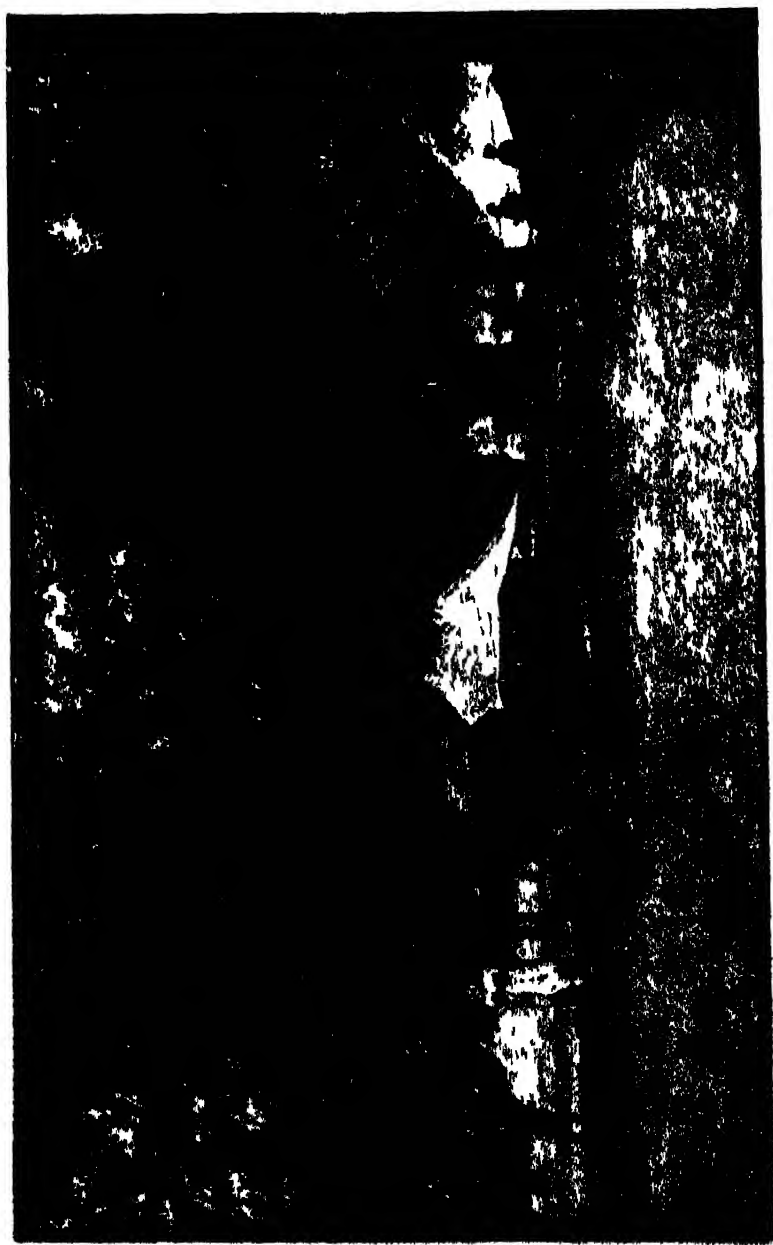
THE AUTHOR.

FREDERICK CODRINGTON NEWTON DE FERRERS HICKS,

*Son of the late Reverend William Hicks, M. A., of Sturmer Rectory, Essex,  
formerly First Lieutenant, R. N.*







A FOREIGN OFFICER'S CAMP

FORTY YEARS AMONG  
THE  
WILD ANIMALS OF INDIA  
FROM  
MYSORE TO THE HIMALAYAS

*Please handle the book carefully*

BY

F. C. HICKS

LATE DE CONSERVATOR IN CHIEF FOREST SERVICE

VOL. I.

With 150 Illustrations, 88 Photos, 45 pen-&-ink sketches and 25 sketch-maps  
(103 full-paged and 67 Coloured-Plates)

80 (304)

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48 Illustrations, 88 Photographs and 25 Sketch-Maps (101 full-paged, and 65 coloured plates).

TO PEN AND INK SKETCHES (all full-paged ; 33 coloured plates.)

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## INTRODUCTION.

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I AM told that a book of this description requires an "Introduction" to show what kind of an individual the author is, and what his qualifications are, to treat the subject in question. This being so, I will have to cast back a bit to see what "hereditary" qualifications I can scrape up in my support.

I think I am justified in saying that the passion for adventure and sport has been a dominant trait in my family for many generations, and was the cause of its close association with the Army and Navy in the turbulent times of the past. However, it will perhaps be sufficient to pick up the thread from my grandfather. The land of his birth was Cornwall, where he owned extensive properties both at Lostwithiel and Penzance; but the life of a country squire was not likely to suit a man of his stamp, so in common with the traditions of the family he too entered the Army and so saw considerable service. While stationed with his regiment in Ireland, being a man of private means, he maintained a large stable and a pack of stag-hounds, and also a pack of fox-hounds in England; and one of the results of his various hunting accidents was that he had to have his head trephined. But this did not daunt him, and even after he retired from the Army, he was still riding hard to hounds when past the age of sixty years, and ultimately succeeded in breaking his neck effectually while attempting an impossible jump.

His three sons, John, Richard and William, then took up the running—the two first entering the Army, and the third, my father, the Navy—and went through the thick of the Napoleonic wars, including the Peninsular War, Trafalgar and Waterloo; my uncle Richard, then a Captain, was severely wounded at Badajoz, while leading, for the second time, a forlorn hope to the breaches—lying disabled for twenty-four hours in a fosse among the dead and dying, with—among other wounds—a bayonet through his knee, before help arrived.

In the meanwhile my father was with Nelson's fleet, and fought at Trafalgar as a Midshipman on board H.M.S. "Conqueror," in which battle he was severely wounded by a cannon ball, which more or less crippled him for life. However, he took part also in most of the principal naval engagements of that war, being specially singled out to conduct numerous cutting-out expeditions, having previously come into notice by a particular act of daring, when he swam with urgent despatches, through the surf to the Spanish shore, the sea being at the time too high to enable a boat to approach the coast. Being also an expert gun-layer, in the time of battle he was usually employed in training the big guns on to the enemies' ships—and in this manner he met with another serious accident, on the explosion of one of the guns, which injured his eyesight for a considerable time. The climax perhaps of his life was when, as Senior Lieutenant on board H.M.S. "Belorphone," he conducted Napoleon for the last time to St. Helena.

At the end of the war, my father retired from the Navy and went to Cambridge, where he studied at Magdalene College as a "Fellow Commoner"; and having obtained his M.A. degree, he entered the Church, and became Rector of Sturmer, on the borders of Essex and Suffolk, where I was born.

Dear old Sturmer—how often in this land of heat, dust and scorching wind, have my thoughts flown to your cool green banks, overhanging willows and deep clear pool; where we boys used to poach the pike—my elder brother Herbert holding me, the small boy of the party, by the heels over the steep bank, while I deftly slipped the boot-lace snare over the gills of the sleepy fish, with an adroitness born of much practice in such poaching. The joy I felt when, after many fruitless endeavours to capture the veteran pike of Wixoe-pool, I finally succeeded one day in slipping our boot-lace snare round his old gills, and felt it taughten as I gave my brother the signal to haul me up. We eased our conscience on this occasion by ostentatiously presenting this pike to the rightful owner, who—little dreaming that it was from his own precious pool—was delighted with our present, for it certainly was a monster. What delightful days those were, when we boys spent our time in with our guns, dogs, ferrets and ponies; when there were no cares nor responsibilities; when all the world was young.

On the whole, we had the entire run of all the neighbouring estates as far as wild game was concerned, for in one way or another we were either related or otherwise connected with most of the owners, so we boys could, and did, do pretty much as we liked.

Newmarket being comparatively close by, our neighbourhood was a great centre for hunting and steeple-chasing; and being light-weights and good riders, my brother and I were frequently in request to exercise and train steeple-chasers and hunter. It was in this manner that I received an early introduction to horse-flesh and hard-riding.

When the time came for serious considerations in regard to my future, it was decided that I should follow in the steps of my mother's brother, Commissioner Willimott, and enter the Home Civil Service, and accordingly I was put into the hands of a crammer. This was much against my will, for I always hated my pen with a better hatred, as I do still; the result was that I became a "failed C.S." But in the meanwhile, Government made an offer of free grants of land in the best parts of Canada to the sons of officers who had served in the wars, so my programme was changed and my education took a practical turn, and I was taught to shoe horses, practical carpentering, farming, smithy's work, etc., etc., - all of which I found to be of the greatest use to me in my after-life in India.

But in my case fate was again to intervene. The glamour of the East had got hold of me. I had been reading a lot about the glories of big-game shooting that was to be had there, and I also made the acquaintance of a man from India who still further inflamed my brain with his accounts of the doings in these eastern lands. The upshot of all this was that I point blank refused to follow what I considered the prosaic calling of a farmer in Canada, and insisted on foregoing my birthright, for the pottage in India; my father gave in to my wishes, and obtained for me the appointment of an Assistant Conservator in the Imperial Forest Service of India.

In the meanwhile, other members of my family, accepting the offer made to them by Government, went out to Canada and took up the land allotted to them. They prospered exceedingly, for on that site has since grown the great town of Halifax, so that each foot of the

land is now worth so much in gold. The climate there also appears to be productive of big and hardy men, for I met one of these Canadian cousins of mine years afterwards who stood six feet four inches in height, and he told me that he was the smallest of his branch of the family out there. My father was over six feet, and so were his brothers; but I do not think any of them came up to this young hopeful.

In spite of the somewhat democratic views which have been imposed on me by my hard life—democratic, in my utter intolerance of anything savouring of “side” whether of wealth or position—I am nevertheless proud of the vigour and vitality of my family which I claim to be of a thoroughly English stock of the Drake and Raleigh type. So I hope to be forgiven the references I make here to the doings of some of its members. In keeping with the traditions of the men of Cornwall, the connection of my family with the Navy dates back for hundreds of years; and it will be seen written in history that in 1702 at the taking of Gibraltar, Captain Hicks was the first man to jump on to the shore below that great fortress. Regarding my father’s connection with the Navy I have already spoken; he was also connected by marriage with a brother officer of his, Admiral Chevallier Syer, whose niece my brother Herbert subsequently married. Here I might mention that the present Lord Kitchener belongs to the Chevallier family of the above branch.

My brother Herbert was the only one of the family who followed in the later footsteps of his father, by entering the Church of England, and is now the Rev. Canon H. S. Hicks, M.A., Vicar of Tynemouth Priory, Northumberland.

General Hicks “Pasha,” who was killed in the Soudan, was also a cousin of mine; when his photo came out in the papers, my friends charged me with being his brother.

While in this vein I should perhaps also mention that members of my wife’s family have also been conspicuous among the makers of the British Empire, such as General Sir Harry Prendergast, the conqueror of Burma, Lord Gough, the conqueror of the Punjab, Lord Roberts, the conqueror of Afghanistan—in comparatively modern times; while in bygone ages their records extend back for more than

eight hundred years, figuring prominently with Strongbow in Ireland, with King Edward III in France, with the Crusaders in Palestine, and with the invading force of William the Conqueror in the year 1066.

But I must really call a halt into this excursion into the past; but in mentioning what I have, I have not been prompted to do so with a view to merely claiming kinship with aristocracy, for I sincerely regret the aristocratic factor in the situation, which prevents a "poor relation" such as I from being hardly on speaking terms as man to man—much less being on the same family footing which I could rightly claim—with my kinsmen who have stamped their names indelibly in the history of the world in general, and of the British Empire in particular. At the same time it may be admitted that I can justly lay claim to a share in the credit of the family in general, and hope that my inheritance may, in a small degree, be reflected in my own career—in however a small way, for we do not all get the same chances in life.

Now to return to my own humble proceedings: In August 1866, now nearly 15 years ago, I landed for the first time in India, and took up my appointment on the 1st of September 1866 at Hoshangabad, C. P., as Assistant Conservator of Forests, where I made the acquaintance of the famous sportsman, Captain J. Forsyth, living in the same bungalow with him, and lent a hand in his various experiments with his famous "shells." While in the district I was employed chiefly on sleeper works for the G. I. P. Railway, which was then only built as far as Khandwa—having a very large establishment of elephants, plants and staff of about 500 men under my charge for the purpose.

From thence I was posted to Chanda, where for eight and ten months at a time I never saw an European, nor heard English spoken; passing my time in the densest primeval forests with only aboriginal tribes and a few native subordinates as my companions: cut off from all intercourse with civilization and railways by hundreds of miles of almost impenetrable forests, swollen rivers and malarious marshes. Once a month perhaps a runner might arrive with my official post, if he had not been killed or drowned on the way, which frequently happened. If he was able to bring through a few

cigars, a bottle or two of whisky or beer, it was then indeed a red-letter day for me, for otherwise I had to do entirely without such luxuries. This was in the days when the Forest Department in India was an experiment in its infancy, and its officers a body of pioneers; when scientific knowledge of forestry was at a discount, and practical pioneering at a percentage.

After some three years of this life, I was transferred to the Mysore States, where I met and married the best woman that ever fell to the lot of a man to meet. After some seven years of a somewhat roving billet in Mysore, I was transferred back to the Central Provinces—when the British Government handed the management of the Mysore State to the native Raja when he came of age.

Thereafter I was posted successively to the districts of Seoni, Wurdah, Chindwara, Seoni, Chindwara, Bilaspur, Mandla, Jubbulpore and Damoh; that is to say, counting my transfers to Chanda and Mysore, respectively, as one transfer in each case—my billet in Mysore, as already stated, having been more or less a roving one—I had altogether only eleven transfers during my service of 32 years, which makes the very fair average of nearly three years in each District. How the present official generation must envy those good old days, for I know one man who has lately had no less than 21 transfers—a number of them over 500 miles in length—within five years of active service; these were just ordinary transfers as an officiating District Officer, and not due to any special circumstances such as that of a special billet that entailed a lot of travelling about.

In 1882 I met with a very serious pig-sticking accident, my horse being killed under me as we both went over a precipice at the tail of a boar after which I was riding at full speed at the time.

Owing to this accident the doctor ordered me to go on a long sea voyage, saying that I had very little chance of recovering the use of my legs under at least two years—both my knees having been terribly damaged.

Having read a lot about Australia being an ideal place for Anglo-Indians to retire in, I now took advantage of these circumstances to go out with my family to have a look at the place, and took a farm out in the back-woods in New South Wales. Well, the least I can say for the accounts we so often read of Australia being the ideal



place for an Anglo-Indian with small means to retire in, is that after personal experience I certainly do not agree.

I was so disappointed with the country that I threw up the farm I had taken, and returned to India and spent the remaining portion of my leave, shooting in company with my old friend W. K. in the Betul District.

It might be a tip worth mentioning to say that I fulfilled the doctor's predictions in regard to my knees, by having them cured by means of sea water within three weeks, the cure consisted of having



the ship's hose turned on to them every three hours as long as I could stand the rush of water thus applied. The chemical properties of the sea-water so applied cured me almost completely by the time I landed in Australia.

In 1887 I went Home to England for the first and last time after an absence of over twenty years, it was in order to place my only son H. at school. My leave on this occasion was only for three months—but it was quite long enough to show me how sadly I had “lost touch” with nearly everything and everybody connected with my long gone past. It was for me a very sad, but instructive, lesson.

However, I had little reason to find fault with my lot in life. My occupation in India was eminently congenial to my taste, for here I led an active, and for the most part an adventurous life. Apart from my official work—which also was of the utmost interest to me—when not engaged in hunting larger and more dangerous game, I occupied my spare time with my dogs, which at one period consisted of a splendid pack of about fifteen couple of Australian Harriers; with these I used to run down sambar, cheetle, bears, or any other kind of animal that would give a sporting run or a fight. Hunting thus in heavy jungles with dogs, the use of a horse was of course out of the question; so it was foot-work for all of us—and glorious health and hard condition.



"CHOTA-HAZRI" AFRICA.

To crown all—what pleasure it was after a hard day's hunting, to be received at camp with a pretty welcome from my wife and my two little daughters. Then a peg (the first and last of the day, for it has been my rule throughout my life never to take any intoxicating liquid of any kind till the sun is down, and then only one peg), a hot bath, and a delicious dinner of game of various kinds, served on a table tastefully decorated by the dear ones at home, in anticipation of the evening's home-coming. During the meal to fight over again the battles of the day—every word of which is being eagerly listened to by willing and sympathetic ears.

Then after dinner to adjourn with a cigar to a roaring camp-fire made of huge logs at a little distance from the tents; and there to

discuss our plans for the next day. In the distance the servants and coolies are probably doing the same—or busily engaged in skinning the tiger slain during the day's hunting—or perhaps cutting and apportioning the deer's meat—as the case might be. What more delightful and healthy life could any man wish for?



F C H

1910



## PREFACE.

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It must be kept in mind that the incidents described in this book are perhaps the pick of the experiences of a long period spent almost entirely in the pursuit of big game in dense jungles, where it is the rule, rather than the exception, for the most unexpected combination of circumstances to occur, and where all preconceived ideas are most liable to be completely confuted. Those sportsmen, who have had the most experience of the vast possibilities of the jungles, will be the last to say hastily that any given combination of circumstances is "impossible" in the jungles; and conversely those, with whom "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," will be the first to jump to hasty conclusions and scoff about such subjects; either out of pure ignorance, or from spite and jealousy—to impress on their hearers how vastly superior they are themselves to the man who has devoted nearly half a century entirely to the subject of which he treats.

However, since it may not be given to everyone to "know it all before"—and better! I have in self-defence as it were taken the precaution of supplying as far as possible as much authentication as happens to be within my means to give, in the shape of details, such as the name of the exact locality and the exact date—even to the day of the week in many cases—at which the incident described occurred; so in such cases the scoffer will have it in his power to go in person if he chooses to the place named and make local enquiries as to whether or not the incident I describe actually took place there on the date I mentioned.

Wherever the exact date is mentioned, the details are taken straight out of my old diaries which I still have by me, which were written up by me on the spot at the time mentioned. The majority—I might say all—of the more important incidents described in this book are supported by such authenticating details—for the chief reason because I have on the whole selected only such incidents, the authenticity of which I could supply by such details—even at the expense of ignoring other perhaps more interesting and exciting

experiences, because the details regarding them which I required do not happen to be forthcoming in my diaries—having been either lost or destroyed by insects, wear and tear during the long course of years during which I have knocked about like a roving Ishmælite in tents, never being in one place for any length of time. Under these circumstances, coupled with the fact that at the time it never once entered my head that I would ultimately write a book on sport, it is certainly due more to great good luck than to good management that I still have a sufficient amount left of the insect-eaten and much tattered fragments of my old diaries to supply me with enough details for not only this volume, but sufficient for a second, and perhaps even a third volume.

But be that as it may, the fact remains that I would never have had the courage to bring out a book of this kind had I not been able to supply authenticating facts from my old diaries—for, without any intention of casting a reflection on those whom it may concern, I hold that it is within the power of almost any tyro, at any rate of those sportsmen of the “little knowledge” type, to write a book on big-game sport, by drawing largely on an unscrupulous and imaginative mind.

In minor matters of course, such as in—shall we call it “necessary padding”—which is required to save the account from baldness, such authenticity cannot be given—indeed, I could not give them save from memory; but this, I trust, is sufficiently well understood to be taken for granted. I have already mentioned that at the time when the diaries were written, I never had any notion that they would ever be required for the present purpose, so naturally they do not contain such details. In fact, on going over my maps, I can recall having shot tigers, buffaloes, bison, etc., at many places, but on going over those diaries which I still have, which refer to the date at which I was camped at the place in question, I may find no mention whatever of having shot the beast, or perhaps only a brief note such as: “shot a tiger 9 feet 4 inches,” even though I might have had a certain amount of fun over the incident. In fact the shooting of such beasts was such a common occurrence with me in those days that I rarely gave the incident a second thought, so that the entry of such notes in my diaries at the time were more or less an accident, except

where some special circumstances prompted me to enter perhaps a somewhat longer note. I met a Forest Officer lately who entered the service some twenty years after I did, who asked me how many tigers I had shot; to this I replied by another question and asked him how many he had shot; to this he said he really could not tell me definitely, for he only kept count until he shot fifty tigers, and had then lost count. But he had shot fifty tigers in the course of a comparatively few years, in localities where I had been a Forest Officer for more than twenty years before him—when there were no railways as now, and when there were ten tigers for every one tiger there is in the same place now. So will it be wondered at that I also have lost count, many, many years ago. I have a vague idea of trying on occasions to count up and accounting for something over 200 tigers which I have shot; but whether those were all of them, or only half, I could not say in the least.

Ask the sportsman who has gone out after black buck more or less regularly every Saturday to Monday for the last forty years in the upper plains of India, how many buck he has shot—and you will place him in much the same dilemma.

Now as to the manner in which this book came to be written: One rainy season after my retirement from official harness, having nothing to do, I was apparently more like a bear with a sore head than usual, when my dear wife jokingly suggested that it might keep me out of mischief if I employed my dull hours in writing a book on my shooting experiences. Having nothing better to do, I acted on the suggestion, and sitting down, I wrote out a rough account of one of my shooting experiences, with no more serious object than that of passing the time for the time being. But on showing this rough draft to my son H., he immediately set about questioning me at great length in regard to all the details that surrounded the incident of which I had written; he then went off to his typewriter and translated a neat and comprehensive account, adding in the further details in their proper place, which he had elicited from me which—as compared with the bald account which I had given—made a great difference to the readability and interest of the tale. I was extremely pleased with the result, and still more so when I found that H. had also drawn a rough illustration of the scene. I then checked the

written account carefully, correcting any mistakes that did not correspond with the actual facts as they occurred—and in a similar manner also corrected the illustrations, pointing out that there should be a tree here and a rock there, and so on. H. then re-typed the written account as corrected by me, and also re-drew the illustration.

My son then made me promise to draft out more such anecdotes, in my spare hours; and in the course of time I wrote out some two hundred such, from which H. selected and treated in the same manner as above, about fifty anecdotes; some few of his illustrations made under my guidance, remaining as he made them, while others were re-drawn or improved and finished by my elder daughter, or by Miss Shuttleworth—to whom by best thanks are due for the care she took over these pictures; while I must also state, in fairness to her technical skill, that Miss Shuttleworth was very considerably handicapped by my exactions in regard to the subjects which she was good enough to deal with according to my lights, and not according to her's—owing to which there are, I am told, many technical faults in drawing, etc., for which I alone must be held responsible.

It is in this manner that this book has come to be written. So the production on the whole, such as it is, is by no means entirely my own, but the results of the combined efforts of the members of my family, which includes myself, my son and two daughters—that is, apart from the help which Miss Shuttleworth so kindly gave us in the matter of the illustrations; my younger daughter (having been my son's companion during the period when he dealt with the literary part of the question) has been H.'s right-hand throughout.

On the other hand, I hold myself personally responsible for all that is set forth in this book—including in particular those portions which, in the interest of the public, may be somewhat "agin" the Government. I have been most careful in checking all the details and eliminating every point that did not correspond with my own personal opinion or with the facts of my actual experience on the spot. In regard to minor details, already stated, I have of course only my memory to guide me—and whether I did, or did not, actually see perhaps a jungle-cock under certain specified conditions, will have to be accepted in this light. But in regard to more important matters of fact, I have as far as possible made a point of supplying authenticating



details in support of them. While in some matters theoretical, as differentiated from those strictly practical, such as in the case of some portions of the chapter on "Rifles For Dangerous Game," my son H. is the author of the expositions set forth therein, but of course on the lines upheld by me personally; while also, in a similar manner, he is also the author of the setting forth of the chapter, entitled "Tiger-boating Systematized," on the lines in which I have personally trained him. The sketch maps of local scenes, I had of course to do for the most part from memory.

Having now made a clean breast honestly, as to how matters stand, I will now let the book speak for itself.

F. C. HICKS.





*Please handle the book carefully*

## PRELUDE.

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With the progress of modern intelligence we find in almost every branch of sport that thought and experience have been eliminating faults, which at one time were considered a part of the game. Science and system are being introduced into every branch of human pastimes. But, strange to say, the methods employed in the sport of tiger-shooting in India is in the main the same now as in time immemorial.

It were as if the glamour of the Indian jungles, the mysteries which surround its inhabitants, their unreasoning fidelity to time-honoured customs and their bigotted aversion to all change had cast a spell over and hypnotized European sportsmen, with the result that for over a hundred years they have been content to subordinate in this matter their own intellect and intelligence.

An Army Officer in action would not dream of placing his grass-cutter in command of his tactical arrangements while he himself took a back seat ; likewise a similar abdication in sport is equally ridiculous, for if a superior knowledge of tactics and strategy is essential in order to outwit human foes, who by no means spend every minute of their existence in a constant game of hide-and-seek with fate, equally necessary is the exercise of a similar knowledge in order to outwit the cunningest of all animals, namely, an experienced old tiger.

Nevertheless at the present day the rule is, with very few exceptions, for sportsmen to submit themselves entirely into the hands of their shikaris and to carry out blindly all their instructions.

This is a most deplorable fact when one comes to consider what an important factor the pursuit of sport is in the training of our soldiers and officers, a pursuit which should teach them self-reliance and wood-craft which on the day of trial, in the field of battle, will be worth as much again as all the theoretical cramming which they ever underwent. We have only to point to the feats of the Veldt sportsmen of the late Boer Republics in proof of this argument. Yet here

in India, with its unrivalled opportunities for the acquirement of this important branch of knowledge in fitting out soldiers to meet the enemies of their country, we find the Briton, otherwise a born leader of men, abdicating his birthright.

By all means make all use of a native's local knowledge, but the sportsman should use it only in the same way as an Army Officer would in the time of war, namely, as a subsidiary to his *own* plan of campaign and not leave the planning of his campaign to an uneducated subordinate. Hitherto books on this subject, when describing an incident, have described it on the *veni, vidi, vici* principle, without any attempt to explain logically the *reasons* for the results and conclusions arrived at by the specified experiences, or to deduct therefrom a theory or a system which would be of practical use to other sportsmen. The reason for this is simply that the incidents described are not the outcome of any system or theoretical plan, and are due, in the main, to chance and hazard.

Some sporting writers, who are only too often accepted as the "authorities" in matters of tiger-shooting, have made such absurd statements as "each tiger shot costing the sportsman from £100 to £200 per tiger," or Rs. 3,000 per tiger—the cost of a motor-car!

At the present day, tiger-shooting in India may be said to be the monopoly of only those two classes who can afford the weight of numbers—since individual effort is so rare—namely, the District Officials, and secondly, the wealthy few who can afford the expenses of a "big-shoot" with its necessary attendant of a number of elephants and a large retinue of followers, when by weight of numbers, rather than by circumspection, the tiger is conquered.

The impecunious sub and his confrères in other branches of life (who are often keener sportsmen in the truer sense of the word than the exponents of "big-shoots," in that the former are more often more willing and keen to bear the burden of the day themselves, while the latter usually leave it to others) have a very poor chance in this branch of sport, and some of the reasons for this are as follows:—

1. He knows of no system to work on, and consequently is obliged to place himself blindfolded into the hands of a native shikari.

2. He is usually entirely ignorant of the existence of the enormous amount of secret opposition which meets every outside sportsman in practically every district of India, and thus he unconsciously becomes the victim of tricks, without even becoming aware that they have been played on him.

It is the author's endeavour in this book to describe, as far as possible, a complete system which will place the chances of the sportsman of small or ordinary means on an equal footing to that of his richer brethren, in that his success will be dependent on his *own* intelligence and exertions, and not on that of his subordinates; thus increasing for the sportsman his zest for the sport, and his satisfaction when he ultimately succeeds by his own efforts. This is perhaps the first attempt to treat the subject of tiger-shooting in India from the theoretical as well as practical point of view, and exposes a number of old-timed fallacies (hitherto accepted as the correct procedures on the recommendation of some hide-bound "authorities" who should have learnt better had they ever taken the trouble to reason out matters and think for themselves) which are quite unjustifiably dangerous to both the sportsman and his men, and also to the inhabitants of the country. The average cost to the sportsman for each tiger he shoots—apart from his ordinary living expenses which he would have to meet anywhere—is here estimated at about Rs. 100 (£6 13s. 4d.), and no elephants, etc., are employed. The various full-page sketch maps will give the reader a far clearer idea of the scenes than any word descriptions could do, and will be of great practical use to sportsmen, in that they show him how to deal with almost every combination of circumstance.

Every effort has been made to bring the treatment of the question up to date and more in keeping with modern thought and intelligence, eliminating as far as possible all the old prejudices, traditions and mistakes, assisted to this end by the author's practical experience of over forty years' shooting in the jungles of India.

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Please handle the book carefully

## CHAPTER I.

### TIGER-BEATING SYSTEMATIZED.

EXTRAORDINARY circumstances are usually productive of extraordinary actions on the part of the individuals concerned. This is especially true of tigers when they are being beaten for. But, strange to say, both European and native shikaris often fail entirely to allow for or recognize this fact.

If when a native, having selected a post for a gun, be questioned as to his reasons for having elected that particular post, it will usually be found that these reasons are something like the following:—

- (a) This spot has from time immemorial been the traditional post for the gun in this portion of the jungles.
- (b) This is a nice *open* place commanding an extensive view on all sides, therefore the tiger will be clearly seen when he comes.
- (c) Do not the footprints of the tiger at this spot show that this is his high road, hence he will surely come down this way when driven.

For the last reason also, though he may sometimes have some notion of the use of stops, the native shikari, if left to himself, more often than not, will fail to post them—for “will not the tiger surely come down his usual road?”

Now let us examine the reasons given in (a), (b) and (c):—

- (a) Fifty years ago, or more perhaps, the local shikari may possibly have fluked the death of a tiger at this spot, and the tradition was thereafter handed down from father to son. Perhaps also in after years some “Sahib” also, by an accidental combination of circumstances, obtained a flying shot at a tiger at this now traditionally “fated” spot, so that its virtues now became more than ever firmly established in the local native mind as being the

one and only post in the locality to which a tiger could be brought before the gun, little taking into consideration the altered conditions at different seasons of the year, or the fact that these jungles may have since been vastly changed by cutting, grazing, burning or other influences, to what they were a few years ago.

But no one more than an ignorant native can be so unreasoningly obstinate in his opinion in such matters. It will be of no use for the sportsman who is accustomed to think for himself to argue with him, for, having once made up his mind on a subject, a man of this nature will not take the trouble to listen to or follow any argument that may present a different view of the matter. Therefore, never argue; simply hear what they have to say, have a look at the place, consult your map and your own common sense, and having formed your own opinion, act on it, without further palaver—which at least will gain their respect, if not their willing co-operation; for there is nothing which natives respect and admire more than a man who has the courage to form his own opinions and acts on them—that is a leader—and no one they, in their hearts, despise more than he who consents to be led.

- (b) It should particularly be kept in mind that in localities where it is the custom always to drive game only in a certain fixed direction and on to certain fixed points, the game soon become educated regarding those points, especially tigers, and soon learn to know the direction in which the true danger lies, and in consequence will refuse to face it, either breaking back over the beaters or through the lines of stops.

Always avoid an *open* spot for your post, for it is an axiom that no wild animal will face an open spot when driven except at *full speed*.

Your object in tiger-shooting is not to fire at a tiger going like a streak of greased lightning with the probability of missing him clean, or perhaps only hitting him in his hind leg and so cause him to turn a man-eater and do fearful damage.

Therefore, never sit in any place where there is not sufficient cover to enable the tiger to advance quietly under the impression that he



is completely concealed from foes on his *own* level—he rarely thinks of looking higher than that.

When such cover is available, if properly handled, the tiger will, as a rule, advance quite quietly, stopping every now and again to listen, thus giving the sportsman (who on his ladder, being on a much higher level than that of the undergrowth cover in which the tiger is standing, can see him clearly, though he would not have done so had he been himself standing on the ground on the same level as the tiger) a steady standing shot at the distance of only a few paces.

If a glade unavoidably intervenes, then sit a few yards *within* the jungle with the glade behind you, for all wild animals, when they arrive on the edge of such a clearing, will invariably halt for at least a few moments, if not minutes, in order to take stock of their foreground, to determine whether they will dash across the opening in front of them or to break back; so if he is posted just inside this cover, the sportsman will then obtain a close standing shot, which he could scarcely miss, as he would probably do had he been seated on the further side of the glade and only got a shot with his rifle at an animal crossing it like a streak of lightning.

- (c) The road which a tiger selects for his nightly promenade will very rarely be the one down which he will come in the full glare of the day. When a tiger finds by the means of scent and by the droppings on the ground that certain animals come habitually to a certain part of the jungles at certain times regularly every day, he has sufficient powers of reasoning it out that those animals will probably be there again on the morrow, and he acts accordingly; that is, on the morrow he lies in wait for them and so secures a dinner. I have seen proofs of this many times in the course of my shooting career.

He also has the sense to apply the analogy to his own case when he finds that he is being hunted in his turn, and will instinctively do all he can to avoid going over the scene of his late peregrinations, where he shrewdly suspects that his enemies will have scented his late passage and will therefore be lying in wait for him there. This is the argument against beating over kills. There is nothing incongruous in this idea, for it is a well established fact that wild

animals are well aware that they leave a scent trail on the ground over which they have lately passed, as is evidenced by deer taking to water and swimming down stream, or a fox doubling on its own tracks in order to throw off the hounds. Therefore, as a rule, do not select a post situated on a path lately passed over by the tiger, for he will then often do a great deal which he would not otherwise do, in order to avoid it. Remember this—a tiger will often fight if you try to force him back over his late footsteps, though in order to regain a forest from which he has lately come, he will probably raise no objection to passing quite close to and parallel with his former track, but not actually over it.

#### BEATERS (I).

In tiger-shooting it should be the sportsman's endeavour to conduct the proceedings with a minimum of risk, especially to his men.

It should be remembered that a tiger is not usually dangerous (excepting man-eaters and tigress with cubs) unless it has been wounded or *frightened*; a frightened tiger is a dangerous tiger should it happen to meet any living thing in its path while it is in a panic-stricken state.

A frightened tiger is also an unmanageable beast, and then a hundred chances to one it will either break back over the beaters and in its panic perhaps kill some of them in its course; or else it will charge through the line of stops and so escape out of the beat; or, if it should happen accidentally to pass by the gun, it will do so at such a pace as to render a successful shot almost impossible.

It must therefore be the sportsman's particular care to avoid scaring the tiger in every way possible.

The collective use of drums, horns, fireworks, guns, etc., among the line of beaters, tends to scare a tiger out of its wits and thus renders it unmanageable, with the result that it will often charge blindly through every obstacle, in whichever direction it happens to have its head pointed at the moment when it lost its self-control and panic seized it.

Therefore, as a *general* rule, the use of all "noisy" instruments and the firing of guns, etc., among the beaters should be strictly forbidden. Excessive noise should only be used when the case is one

of two unavoidable evils—that of either allowing a man-killer to live, or to accept the risk entailed of beating for a beast who is known to be in the habit of breaking back over the beaters. In which case the tiger will also have to accept the choice of two evils—either of chancing the suspected danger in front at a rush, or of braving the excessive noise in its rear.

However, the quieter the beat the better as a rule, with an ordinary tiger, though shouting alone on the part of the beaters, if not done to excess, will not usually scare a tiger beyond control, for tigers are accustomed to hear the shouts of the human voice in the jungles almost every day of their lives, and the only effect it will have on them is the desired one, namely, to make them move off quietly in the opposite direction.

Frequently, when I knew that the tiger was on foot, that is to say, not lying asleep, I have successfully beaten it out and killed it without any shouting whatever on the part of the beaters. The only sound during the beat that was allowed was the clicking of two sticks, which each beater was made to carry for the purpose, accompanied by the shying of stones and ordinary talking among the line of advancing men, but no shouting; the idea being to deceive the tiger into thinking that they are only a party of ordinary woodcutters, whom he is accustomed to meet and successfully avoid almost every day, and therefore does not connect them with any designs in regard to himself and so does not get flurried; whereas the opposite is the case when he hears an unusual amount of excessive shouting in the ordinarily quiet jungles, especially if this is accompanied by the use of tomtoms and fire-arms, the object of which, his past experiences in regard to such unusual disturbances tells him at once, is connected with him and him alone.

The moral is now clear: Try as long as possible to delude the tiger into thinking that your operations have no particular connection with him in person. But more often than not on such occasions, this "silent" procedure is not compatible with safety to your men, the chief reason being that the tiger is probably gorged with meat and is lying in a heavy sleep, when, if the beaters advance too quietly, they may stumble on top of him as he lies asleep, with the result that, on waking up suddenly to find himself surrounded by

men and not having had time to consider as to in which direction the land is clear, the tiger may lose his head and charge blindly through the men, perhaps killing some of them in his panic and escaping out of the beat. Here we have a case in which *panic* is also caused by the opposite extreme, namely, by what I call the "silent" method of beating, which should therefore only be resorted to when the sportsman has reason to know that the tiger is on the alert, and then only with an even tempered tiger—that is, not with a tigress with cubs or a tiger that is known to be particularly vicious or callous of human beings.

As the safest general method, the medium method is the best. Moderate shouting, clicking of sticks and stone-throwing is always enough to wake up the tiger in time for him to make up his mind and select at leisure his line of retreat, and at the same time it will not scare him beyond his self-control, for tigers are usually very quick of hearing, even when asleep. The principle then is: the least noise possible the better, and the greater the noise the more the chance of causing *panic* and therefore dangerous to the beaters. To deliberately disregard these principles in tiger-shooting and so render the tiger panic-stricken, unmanageable and dangerous, I consider the height of criminal folly. But what can be said of so-called experienced sportsmen who preach the dangerous doctrine of "panic" to younger men who are often only too eager to take their words for gospel. Obvious as these facts are to any thinking men, it is astonishing to see the kind of advice which is given in print by men who should have learnt better, but have not done so simply because they failed all their lives to use their own common sense in the matter, and allowed themselves to be wrongly led.

In proof of this, let the reader take up almost any of the present day books on tiger-shooting, and in regard to the beat he will be almost sure to see something like the following, which I have extracted *verbatim* from one such book (the italics are mine):—

"As soon as we were all seated, the beat began; our *band* on this occasion was *unusually good*. It produced a *loud* and *piercing* discord. Almost immediately was heard the sound as of a horse *galloping* down the stony bed of the nalla. It was a tigress *charging at full speed* like a *flash of lightning* . . . . ." etc.

What also, indeed, could have been expected under the circumstances. How differently that tigress would have come out to the guns had she been quietly and properly handled.

Again, too much noise is only one of several causes which render tigers unmanageable. Another cause is brought about by beating the tiger during the heat of the day in the hot weather season, though this practice also is held up by the "authorities" on tiger-shooting as the correct one to adopt. This practice is a very great mistake and should only be adopted in very exceptional circumstances, and *not* as a *rule* as so many writers recommend.

The stones, rocks, sand and even the ordinary ground during the midday heat of the Indian summer become so hot that any soft-padded animal forced to walk on them is caused excruciating pain, equal indeed to that which would be caused by having to walk on red-hot irons, for I have frequently found tigers, when shot after having been thus bullied during the heat of the day, who had their pads quite raw or blistered, while in one case in my experience the pad of one foot of the tiger came completely off. Such a tiger, to all intents and purposes, is a "wounded" tiger, in consequence of which he is completely off his head with rage and pain, and therefore quite unmanageable and dangerous to the lives of the beaters.

Nevertheless, let us see what one writer has to say on this subject, the author of another book (the italics are mine):—

"Beaters are then collected and a *start* made about *eleven* o'clock, when it is very hot. The object of *deferring* the beat *till the intense heat of midday* is that tigers are very unwilling to travel during the heat; in fact, it has a great effect on them, and I have seen a tiger's feet quite raw and blistered by having to pass much over *burning* rocks and sand during a beat."

Here it is acknowledged that tigers are very unwilling to travel during the heat, and that when he is compelled to do so he becomes practically a "wounded" animal, from which it follows that he becomes also very dangerous and unmanageable. Moreover, at this intensely hot season, water is almost as essential to a tiger as it is to a fish; yet it is coolly recommended to make defenceless beaters force such an animal under such circumstances to travel *against* his will up to the guns.

In such cases there is a great risk that the tiger will refuse to budge from the water, and some of the more foolhardy of the beaters who try to force him from it will be killed; or, supposing that he made a start in the first instance—perhaps in the hopes of making a dash for some other water—but soon the intense pain of his burning feet renders him furious, and then being no longer amenable to management, he will charge headlong back over the beaters, probably killing some of them, or, through the line of stops, heedless of all their efforts to turn him in the direction of the gun.

But the author of the above book, like many others of the same kind, apparently considers stops a superfluity, for I see no mention therein of their use.

But let us to our muttons, or rather to our tiger's blistered pads. Here again is a case where sportsmen deliberately blindfold their own intelligence and allow themselves to be led by wrong-headed traditions.

I really cannot resist quoting another para. from the above book which happens now to be before me, for it is too delicious (the italics as before are mine):—

“Then the beat begins by much shouting, *beating of drums, blowing of rumbulas*, or native horns, and *fifes* by the beaters perhaps half a mile away, accompanied by the noise of some *twenty rattles*, which all combined to create such a *pandemonium of sound*, that few decent-minded tigers will stand it for long.”

Poor tiger! Quite so. And this is the kind of stuff with which young sportsmen come out primed to this country, to be dogged in consequence by what they term “persistent bad luck” in all their efforts in tiger-shooting, simply because they are as bad as their predecessors in shutting their eyes to common-sense reasoning.

### STOPS (I).

This portion of the work in tiger-beating stands in the very first order of importance and delicacy throughout the whole range of the operations; so chalk it up in large red letters on to the walls of your room, your looking-glass, your whisky bottle, or anything else that is dear to you and which you look on often.

The posting of stops on each side of a gun is an art, but an art, the real significance and importance of which is almost entirely misunderstood, if not unknown, to the majority of the sportsmen of the present day in India.

On either side of the gun, the wings of the stops should be so arranged that each stop is so placed in respect to his neighbour that there remains no loophole between them through which the tiger, being properly handled, has a possibility of escape.

The ends of each wing should also, as far as possible, be cleft in with the ends of the lines of beaters.

The amount of noise made by the stops situated at the extreme ends of the wings should be the same as that made by the beaters. But thereafter, the amount of the noise made by each stop respectively must decrease in volume as the position of the stop approaches the position of the gun, until it ends altogether in silence when within about seventy or a hundred yards of the gun—according to the density of the cover. The above is a preliminary on this subject; more later.

#### THE BEAT.

The attached plan of a beat is necessarily elaborate in order to be explicit. It is given in this form in order to explain a general principle and not a hard-and-fast rule.

The plan is that of a beat in *dense* cover containing sufficient trees upon which to place stops, and worked, for convenience, by one hundred men, sixty of whom are beaters and forty are stops, of the latter twenty being in each wing. The sportsman from his perch on his ladder commands at least 25 yards on either side of him; so the nearest stop is placed at a distance of 30 yards from him.

*Stops :—*

On the commencement of the beat—

- (a) Stops from 1 to 5 (to 70 yards from the gun) will continue to remain perfectly silent until the time when they may see the tiger heading in their direction, when they will only give a low cough just sufficient to turn the tiger but not enough to frighten him.

- (b) Nos. 6 to 9 (150 yards from gun) will commence to gently tap a branch, but will make a very slight noise thereby.
- (c) Nos. 10 to 11 (210 yards) will also tap, but louder than Nos. 6 to 9.
- (d) Nos. 12 to 14 (330 yards) will tap loudly and will also keep up a continuous conversation among themselves.
- (e) Nos. 15 to 17 (530 yards) will keep up a continuous though modified shouting.
- (f) Nos. 18 to 20 (770 yards) will keep up a continuous and loud shouting.

It will be noticed that the distance between the stops nearest the gun is much less than the distance between those further away. The reason for this is that the stops further away from the gun are making a much greater noise; the result is that the tiger will hear the greater noise at a greater distance and will so be prevented from heading in their direction at all, whereas the stops nearer the gun are necessarily quieter or silent, so that here the tiger will not become aware of their presence until he is almost up to them, so that unless the stops here are put close enough together so as to actually command by sight the distance between them, there is a great danger of the tiger slipping away between them unseen.

From the plan it will be seen that the tiger is completely and absolutely tied in without a single loophole of escape, except that of force, to which he would only resort if mismanaged.

He is thus gradually and insensibly led up to the gun, where he will appear quite quietly and probably give a standing shot at only a few paces distance, when it will only be the sportsman's own fault if he fails to kill him dead with the first shot.

Now a few words in regard to the alignment of the stops. Remember that a tiger always dislikes a narrow or tight place, so never if possible place the wings of stops on either side of the gun in the form of an acute angle V, for in being driven from one line of stops immediately on to the other line, the tiger will get panic-stricken and will in consequence break through the stops and escape.



Give him plenty of room between the two lines of stops in which to roam about at leisure and take his own time, for which purpose it is necessary to place the two wings of the stops so that they together form an arc.

Such is the rough outline of the art of placing stops, the further details of which I will go into later.

#### A TIGER-SHOOT.

Having given the reader, I hope, an idea of the principle on which the use of stops is based, I will now proceed to put the machinery into motion and try to show how it will work as a whole.

The first point to consider is the selection of seasons. The choice of seasons in tiger-shooting is governed by a number of important considerations, which may be roughly classed as those of the cold weather *versus* the hot weather.

I will now give a sketch of the various seasons:—

*15th June, July, August, September:—*

Rainy season; absolutely precludes systematic tiger-shooting as a general rule.

*October, November, December:—*

Water and heavy grass and foliage cover everywhere. In order to avoid the heavy dew and spear-grass prevalent at this season, and to graze on the winter cultivations (rabi), the animals drift down to the fringes of the forests: and tigers follow them. Tigers also now have their best coats, and the cold makes them move about more so that kills now are easily obtained.

*January and February:—*

Intensely cold, and water still plentiful: with an additional advantage in that now there is less cover, for the deciduous trees are in the process of shedding their leaves. The jungles now are not so heavy and the climate is delightful all day long. In my opinion this is the nicest time for tiger-shooting.

*March and April:—*

Water is now scarce, and the heat considerable but not too oppressive. All the deciduous trees are now entirely bare of foliage, except Mahua (*Bassia latifolia*), Palas (*Butea frondosa*). Amaltosa

(*Cassia fistula*), and Achar (*Buchananja latifolia*), which regain their leaves in March or early April. These excepted trees usually grow on the higher grounds or plateaux forming delightful oasis of very dense shade in otherwise denuded forests; the agitation of their large leaves in the wind appears to drive away flying insects such as flies, gnats, mosquitoes, etc., and also seems to catch the breeze and deflect it downwards, for which reasons they are the favourite retreats of bears and tigers at this season. Tigers in particular almost invariably retreat to these shades on the plateaux *above* rather than remain down below by the water in the evergreen covers such as Jamun, etc., which at this time of the year are infested with flying and stinging insects, where also they are more liable to be disturbed by human beings coming to drink water or to fish, etc., for at this season it is not yet so hot that tigers are obliged to stay by the water all day as they do during the intense heat of May. It is for this reason that tiger-shooting during March and April is somewhat uncertain, for having had their drink they are independent of water for the rest of the day and are apt to wander a long distance from the scene of their kill in search of suitable shade on the higher grounds of the neighbourhood—perhaps miles before they are satisfied—when the ground being now thickly covered with leaves, it is impossible to track them or ascertain whether they are lying north, south, east or west of their kill. It is very common and fatal mistake that many sportsmen make in thinking that because March and April are somewhat warm, the tigers must then necessarily be by the water; so that, while they are uselessly beating the grounds down below by the water, the tigers under the Mahua trees on the plateaux above hear the disturbance and clear off. Tigers, being very suspicious beasts, dislike any circumscription, whether natural or otherwise, in their choice of a lair. In winter, their choice of a lair is not limited in this manner, for there is then heavy cover everywhere; consequently they do not then become suspicious and will lie up quite close to their kills. Whereas in March and April their choice of a lair being limited, they at once become suspicious and wander far from their kills, which makes their quest during these months very uncertain work indeed, and is the cause of much disappointment. So those whom it may concern will do well to remember this.

*May and June:—*

Most deciduous trees are now in partial, if not full, foliage, so that the cover is extensive. But the heat now is terrific both for man and beast, so that tigers are now practically tied to the water and cannot exist away from it, and it is now extremely dangerous work for beaters to try and force them away from it, to travel over the burning rocks and sand. They should on no account be beaten during the heat of the day at this season (as is usually recommended) if the safety of the beaters is a consideration: they should be beaten only very early in the cool of the morning, or walked up on foot, as we did at Laurimi and Betul—described elsewhere in this book. Of course they are much more easily located now, but in view of the very poor coats which tigers carry at this season, and the great hardships entailed to both master and men by camp life in this terrific heat, I consider the game hardly worth the candle.

*General principle:—*

Except during May and June, as a general rule look for tigers on the *higher* grounds in the neighbourhood of their kill, especially on winter *mornings*, and in March and April.

Tigers, like sambar, always prefer being driven *up* hill, and will often break back if beaten down.

Also, tigers as a rule hate being driven up a *narrow* place such as a gully or a ravine, and in such cases will invariably do their best to travel along on *top* of the bank of such a place, if the bank has sufficient cover on it.

I trust the above hints may be of service to sportsmen, after perusing which the reader may perhaps therein recognize some of the reasons for his past failures in tiger-shooting.

The system which I employ in beating being applicable to any extent of cover no matter how extensive, I am not tied down to shooting only in seasons when cover is at a minimum.

Personally I much prefer the cold weather season for tiger-shooting, for apart from the fact that it is much pleasanter to work out of doors at this time than when "the earth is like iron and the sky like brass," I consider that tigers are much more manageable in the cold season, carry better coats, and kills are much easier and more frequently obtainable.

So in the following discussion we will consider that the cold weather is selected as the season for our operations.

In selecting a country the first point to consider, apart from its forests, is its water-supply, for where water is scanty the game will be scanty and tigers here in consequence will be few and far between.

The next point to look to is the presence or absence of villages in the neighbourhood of the shooting area, for where there are no villages, beaters will not be obtained, unless a standing camp is maintained with the necessary commissariat arrangements; for it must be remembered that I am describing a shoot which is to be within the scope of sportsmen of moderate means.

Hence the beaters must be inhabitants of the neighbourhood in which the shoot is to be conducted, and not imported from a distance.

If the area to be shot over includes Government Reserved Forests, it will be necessary for the sportsman to apply to the Forest Divisional Officer in charge for a formal permit, stating the number of guns, the period for which the permit is required, and the local names or numbers of the blocks or areas in which it is proposed to shoot.

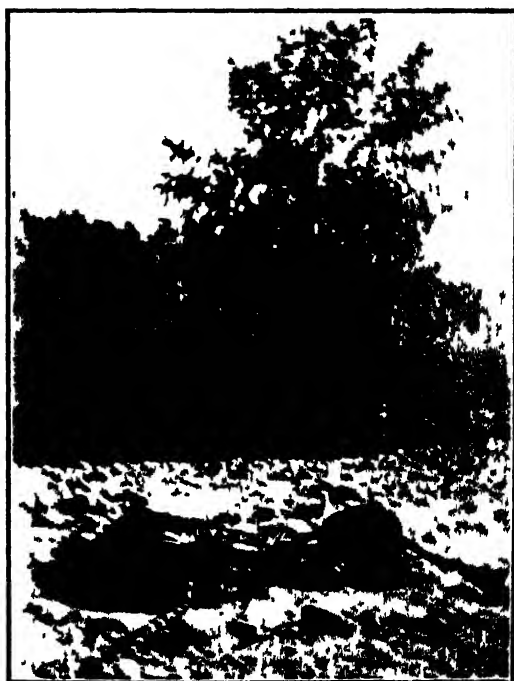
It is also imperative to first win the goodwill of the leading authority of the district, namely, the District Magistrate or Collector, by writing a courteous letter to him and asking him if he has any objection to the sportsman shooting in that particular portion of his district.

This advice holds good whether the sportsman intends to shoot in Government, or in zamindari, forests, for the influence of the District Magistrate is equally potent for the sportsman's comfort and success in whatever part of the district he may be. Where the goodwill of the district authorities cannot be *sincerely* won, the outside sportsman is strongly advised not to attempt to go there at all, but to choose some more favoured place; otherwise he will merely waste both his time and money. However, on these points I will touch again later.

Now a few words in regard to shooting in zamindari forests: It is a common notion among Europeans that tiger-shooting is to be had only in Government Reserved Forests and that zamindari forests are not worth trying.

This is a great mistake, especially in regard to that finest and heaviest class of tiger, the old cattle-litter.

Zamindari forests as a rule are open to grazing all the year round, and being the private property of local landowners, these forests are naturally more resorted to by the local cattle than are the Government forests, where the grazing dues are perhaps not only heavier but also the conditions are more exacting and the consequences of infringement more serious.



Again, as mentioned before, during the winter the animals drift down to the fringes of the forests in order to graze at night on the bordering winter cultivations, and tigers follow them; while in the dry seasons of the year the Government forests are closed to all grazing; consequently cattle-lifting tigers betake themselves during these seasons to the zamindari forests and put up in such shady covers as happen to be in the neighbourhood of such forests. While

the green grass springing up on the ashes of the burnt zamindari forests attracts animals and the tigers follow them, the grass in Government fire-protected forests has become coarse and uneatable. In view of this, the sportsman, who keeps his eyes open, might obtain very good sport without entering Government forests at all.

But here again the sportsman will find that a little tact and courtesy is also a very useful commodity in his relations with local native landowners. European sportsmen shooting in zamindari forests very often entirely ignore the rights and privileges of the local landowner or zamindar, and usually fail to obtain, either directly or indirectly, his concurrence with the project to shoot in his private forests. Out of respect for the ruling race the native zamindar usually abstains from making any open objection to such proceedings, but he feels the slight nevertheless, and sometimes the offending sportsman does not get the support and assistance which would be his with tact and courtesy.

The native mind is very susceptible to the mystic; he respects the Sahib who, though polite and courteous to him, is yet reserved in manner. I am speaking of course of middle class natives, the small landowners whom sportsmen meet in jungle tracts.

On arriving in the locality of a zamindari shooting ground where the sport man proposes to shoot, he should ascertain the village in which the landowner, or his agent (*karinda*), of the forests in question resides, and on the following day he should make a point of passing through this village, and while doing so, casually enquire if the zamindar is at home. Being informed in the affirmative, he might then pull up at his "chaupal" and ask to see him. He will at once be given a chair, or, in its absence, a native cot to sit on, while the great man is putting on his fineries for the occasion.

It should be remembered that a native who is the owner of one or more villages is usually entitled to be seated in the presence of an European; so when the zamindar makes his appearance, the sportsman, after the usual mutual enquiries regarding health, etc., should request him also to be seated. Also, in speaking to a native of this position, always use the second person plural "*arj*" and not the second person singular "*thum*," though at the same time maintain a

strictly reserved manner. These are little things, but they carry great weight with the native mind, as tending to raise the individual in the eyes of his fellows and subordinates on the one hand and at the same time preserving mutual respect.

During the conversation that follows, the zamindar should be asked if he has any objection to the sportsman shooting in his forests. This little piece of courtesy will usually have the effect of at once making the zamindar the sportsman's friend, and he will voluntarily offer to give him every help in his power, whereupon the sportsman should at once take him at his word, and so put him on his honour as it were regarding his personal comfort and success while on his lands, by telling him that if in the future he has any complaints to make against the villagers, he will hand them up to be dealt with by their own overlord, namely, the zamindar. When leaving, the sportsman might ask the zamindar to let him know promptly if at any time any of the villagers have any complaints to make against his camp-followers, whether of non-payment for supplies or of any other kind, and should wind up by inviting the zamindar to return his call. This he will be almost sure to do, if all is going to be well, probably accompanied by a presentation of a "dollie" of flowers, fruit, and perhaps some native sweetmeats.

The sportsman then need have no fear of any obstructions being wantonly placed in his way provided of course he has first obtained the countenance of the district officials *and has made known the fact to the native inhabitants*; for all his efforts will be in vain if the zamindar has had a hint that the official countenance is against the sportsman, or if he is in doubt on this point; for he has the official with him always and the sportsman only to-day.

But the difficulties do not end here, for having obtained the concurrence of the local landowner and of the officials of the district, the sportsman must next consider the question as to whose personal interest it might be that he should fail to get the tiger—and these are several, which might be classified under the following four heads:—

1st.—Villagers in localities within convenient reach of railways, where they make a regular living by acting as beaters to a constant succession of sportsmen. The death of their local tiger would mean

a serious loss to them in *bakshish* and wages, so they will never allow him to be killed if they can prevent it by some one of the numerous tricks at which such people are adepts, preserving the local tiger to serve as a bait to lure a further series of deluded sportsmen. Therefore never be induced to go to such a place.

2nd.—The local professional shikari, who habitually brings out a succession of sportsmen to this locality after the local tiger, to be sent away unsuccessful each in his turn. He is merely a tout for the above kind of villagers, so fight very shy of him and his proffered services. Achieve neutrality if you can, or, better still, obtain his removal altogether from the neighbourhood during the shoot.

3rd.—The “Chamars”—a low caste of village scavengers, whose universally acknowledged right is the carcass and skins of all dead animals of any kind whatsoever, who also usually obtain from Government a license to appropriate the carcasses and skins of all animals found dead in the forests. These Chamars are an outcaste community usually living in a separate settlement on the outskirts of each village; they are very clannish, in consequence of which it is very difficult ever to get any legal evidence against them, so that they are beyond the influence of the district official authorities, and to a certain extent of their local zamindar also. These people, I might say, live chiefly on carrion, eating the flesh of any kind of dead animal they may find, no matter how putrid it might be, and appropriating, preparing and selling the hides of all such dead animals. Under these circumstances it might be said that they depend for their food on disease and the local tiger. Regarding the local tiger, these people are more conversant with him and his daily doings than any one else; for it is he, when things are dull and there is no disease, who supplies them with their daily food. Those who are intimate with jungle life are aware of the habit which crows have of starting off in pairs every morning to hunt every nook and corner of the jungles for the remains of animals killed overnight by various feline. The Chamars are exactly the same. Having found the kill, the old carrion-crow sits on the topmost dead branch of the tallest tree in the neighbourhood, and depressing both his head and tail simultaneously, announces his joyful tidings with his loud *co-rrrr-keew! co-rrrr-keew!* The keen-eyed vulture, perhaps a mile up in the air, seeing the action of the crow below, at once swoops



down to investigate the cause; other vultures seeing him follow suit in turn, so that within an hour of the crow's discovery, the air in the neighbourhood of the kill is thick with vultures. The Chamars, who are also on the look out, see the vultures and are also quickly on the scene, and by advancing in a body and shouting, they frighten away the feline and thus secure the remains of his kill. In this manner the local tigers and panthers supply the Chamars with hundreds of kills yearly, and in many localities they are their one and only means of support, and they look upon them in a manner as their gods.

Can it be wondered at then that Chamars invariably do their utmost to preserve the life of their bread-winner, even perhaps to risking their lives, in the interest of their families, in this matter? Their knowledge of the tiger's habits and temperament is with them a matter of personal intimacy; they also know every twist and turn of the jungles from their earliest days, and know exactly where their tiger is in the greatest danger and where he is safest. What easier then for them than to baffle the efforts of an unsuspecting sportsman? In fact it is these very people whom sportsmen usually employ to tie out their kills, etc. Consequently, long before the sportsman's shikari is stirring, a party of Chamars have arrived on the scene, perhaps even before daybreak, and by means of shouting and stone-throwing have driven the tiger clean out of the jungle to safer quarters.

To show the daring which Chamars are capable of in this line, in even to defying the district authorities, I will give an instance in my own experience.

Some Chamars, on one occasion, were enlisted by my shikaris to help them to tie out kills. On the date mentioned, we obtained a kill, and so certain was I of the tiger, that I did not take the trouble to inspect the scene of the kill. But to my surprise the tiger failed to put in an appearance in the beat. So after the beat was over I went to inspect the remains of the kill, but failed to find any remains of it whatever. The first thing that attracted my attention was the fact that the rope had not been broken, but *cut* clean by a knife. Then I knew for certain that something had occurred; so spreading out my men in a line, we searched the jungles, and after a time found a spot in a secluded nook where the ground was covered with blood, with the footmarks

of a number of men and the remains of a small fire at which they had apparently smoked. It was clear now what had happened : the local Chamars had come early, before my men ; had carelessly cut the rope, driven my buff off to this secluded spot, killed it and cut it up into equal loads for each man of the party to carry ; and then, after having sprinkled some blood on the spot where the beast had originally been tied to make it appear that the tiger had killed it and carried it away, had gone off to their homes.

I at once visited their houses and succeeded in recovering therefrom the remains of the entire buff, including the skin with head and horns attached, so that there was no difficulty whatever in identifying it. These people I had suitably dealt with in accordance with law, and thereafter I had no more trouble in this neighbourhood, beating out and killing the tiger shortly afterwards without any difficulty.

This will show what chance the outside sportsman stands at the hands of these people, especially when the majority of sportsmen are entirely ignorant of the ways, in some cases of even the name, of these people, much less their daring proclivities. So to be forewarned perhaps now will be to be forearmed.

The best plan will be, on arriving on the scene of a new shooting ground, for the sportsman to at once inform the local Chamars that their objects and tricks are fully known to the sportsman, and that a special look-out will be kept for them, and that if they are found guilty of any of their pranks the full extent of the law will be used against them. In a case like this each one must fight for his own hand, or admit failure.

This intimation will often obtain their neutrality. But it will never be safe to depend on this, so the special precautions, mentioned later, will also have to be maintained, for in my experience these people are much more persistent in their endeavours to preserve the life of their bread-winner than any other.

4th class (of obstructionists).—The subordinate officials of various Government departments in the district. With these it is the favour of their official superiors that is at stake, or they imagine so, whether it is so or not ; and obviously the villagers are entirely under their thumb at all times.

So if the sportsman wishes to make certain of success he must rely entirely on himself, and therefore be prepared to face doggedly a lot of hard work, and withal to use his own wits constantly in reasoning things out for himself, and not indolently leave this sometimes troublesome task to be settled, or, as is more often the case, to be shelved by his native subordinates.

A local professional shikari is quite unnecessary to a sportsman who knows his work. Any ordinarily intelligent villager who is acquainted with the lay of the jungles, the position of the water, etc., and who could be relied on to answer questions truthfully, is quite sufficient. Such a man, being born and bred in the place, supplemented with the sportsman's map, will be quite sufficient to supply all the information that is necessary. Now in regard to the locating of the tiger. It must be remembered that a tiger soon "works out" a locality; when he has been in one locality for several days running, the animals smell his passings at every twist and turn, so that they either desert that portion of the jungle, or they become so much on the *qui vive* that the tiger comes to the conclusion that it is better to look for pastures new than to seek them where they are all so much on the look-out for him. So it is in the nature of the thing that a tiger cannot stay in one place for more than few days at a stretch, except in specially created circumstances, such as the presence of a herd of domestic cattle or where he is retained by the treacherous hospitality of sportsmen.

In my opinion, as a general rule a tiger does not kill more than once in about five days; that is to say, he arrives in a fresh locality, takes one of the animals here unawares, kills and eats of it on the first and second, and even the third day; this lasts him through the fourth and fifth days, after which he again begins to feel the pangs of hunger, but finding that the animals here are now all on the look-out for him, he marches clean away, in one night often going for twenty miles without stopping. He then kills again, and the performance is repeated, after which he moves on to a third place—moving generally somewhat in a circle. By this time the first place has had a rest of some ten or fifteen days or more, according to the luck he has had elsewhere; so he again visits the first place, and so on, round and round on a regular beat goes the tiger.

These beats range from eight to twenty miles in length by eight to ten miles in width, according to the seasons of the year and the strength of the individual tiger in command, so that the extent and durations of the tiger's peregrinations usually become well known to the jungle tribes and local villagers, who may often be heard to say, when talking among themselves: "he (the tiger) was here so and so many days ago, he is therefore probably at such and such a place now, so he will be back here again in so and so many days."

The old proverb about the stern chase being a long one is very true in tiger-shooting. "Dogged that does it" is my motto in tiger-shooting; sit tight in one place where you *know* the tiger is bound to come in the ordinary course of his rounds; stick to it and hang on doggedly to that one place, using the interval of waiting in educating the inhabitants of the locality as to the reality of your grim determination to slog down that particular tiger even if you have to stick there for a year for him, at whatever cost to yourself and to them. Scout all the suggestions they are sure to make to the effect that the jungle in which you are at the time being is not the resort of the tiger you want; that in such and such a jungle ten miles away a very much finer tiger resides, etc., etc. Make them understand that no other tiger than this particular one will satisfy you. They do not mind taking risks with strangers if the risk is only to be of a few days' duration; but if it is going to be prolonged indefinitely, the risk of being caught out red-handed at their pranks sooner or later becomes too great and frightens them; but when they finally realize the situation and gauge your unalterable determination to *stay* till you do get the tiger, they will throw up the sponge, if for nothing else but to get rid of you and your unpleasant followers. This is more than half the battle, for now, with judicious handling, the tiger is as good as dead.

On the other hand, if the sportsman goes running about all over the country, knowing that he is not going to stay with them for any length of time, the natives do not hesitate to play their pranks, for they have no time to learn or fear the character of the sportsman.

It is better to sit tight and get one tiger in six weeks than to spend six years in futile pursuit, as I have known some men to do.

In fact I know a number of men who, owing to their habit of striking camp instantly the moment they heard of a kill a dozen miles away, have been out in India trying spasmodically after tigers in this manner for ten years and more without shooting a single tiger. I therefore cannot agree with Mr. Aflalo regarding the following paragraph taken from his book entitled "The Sportsman's Book for India":—"Throughout all the central and southern parts of India, with which I am acquainted, a two months' shoot involves marching in all three or four hundred miles zig-zagging about as you hear of tigers having killed cattle, and moving camp on an average ten or a dozen miles every alternate day." I have not only been acquainted with the central and southern parts of India, but I might also say I have been familiar with them for over thirty years, and that as a Forest Officer. And I do not think, were all official influence and pressure entirely withdrawn from a sportsman in these regions and he were left unsupported to depend entirely on himself and four or five personal servants, if he adopted Mr. Aflalo's advice of moving camp ten or a dozen miles after tigers every alternate day, I do not think he would shoot one tiger in dozen years, except by coming across one accidentally as he might do even in Piccadilly should one escape there from a travelling menagerie. But that would not be by woodcraft, with which we are now dealing in its scientific sense as applied to the sport in question.

I maintain that three parts of the battle is in the overcoming of local obstructions ; and this, a sportsman who is shooting entirely off his own bat without any official help, is quite unable to effect if he elects to rush about all over the country as recommended by Mr. Aflalo.

Sit tight in one place and hammer away doggedly, and do not leave the place until you do get the tiger. At most you will meet with your reward within six weeks, if not within six days, if your character for doggedness be known. Most young sportsmen would perhaps consider such a result satisfactory.

In every matter in which there are dealings with natives of India, the only road to success is to acquire a knowledge of the workings of the Oriental mind, and how to meet them.

It is for this reason again that accurate large scale maps are so necessary to sportsmen in India. But when so many sportsmen, through thoughtlessness and want of observation, are ignorant of even the existence of such a necessity, what wonder then that so few of them ever trouble to take out large scale maps with them when out shooting, and are thus compelled to place themselves entirely in the hands of such people.

With a large scale map of the locality, the sportsman can at once convict an inaccurate informer or *shikari* ; and as soon as the latter recognizes this power, that moment he will fear his master and the battle is won.

Two maps are required for the purpose ; one to a scale of one inch to one mile to give a good general idea of the lay of the country, and a second of four inches to one mile to serve to work out the more detailed schemes when the time comes to determine the direction of the beat, etc., etc.

With the help of the most trustworthy and intelligent of the local men, the sportsman should make himself thoroughly conversant with the lay of the country and of his maps, marking by hand on the latter all the places where the local men say there is water, thick or thin cover, etc., ; after this he should spend a couple of days or more in thoroughly checking and making himself acquainted with every nook and corner of the area to be worked over, making careful notes the while, both on the maps and in a note-book for the purpose.

Now let us see how we stand. This is a cold-weather shoot : we have obtained the necessary permits, gained the favour of both the district and local authorities ; we have demonstrated against the local *Chamars* ; we have inspected and checked the forests and made ourselves thoroughly acquainted with all the details connected with them. Consequently we are now in a position to judge which is the best spot at which to obtain a kill in view of a beat on the following day.

#### TYING OUT A "KILL."

This is a very important work, for on the spot selected, and on the manner in which the kill is tied, will depend to a great extent the success or non-success of the beat on the following day. I will attempt to tabulate this work:—

1.—(a) The spot selected as the site for the kill must be at least within two miles of good water at which the tiger can drink after he has killed and eaten. The closer the water the better, but it is *not a sine quâ non* in the cold weather for the kill to be tied very near the water ; if the kill is within about two miles of water, the tiger, after having killed and eaten, will go and have a drink, and then, as a rule, will return to the neighbourhood of his kill, where, if the cover is good and other things also satisfactory, he will usually lie up within a few hundred yards of his kill and not require another drink till the evening.

(b) The spot selected must also have good and sufficient cover near by in which the tiger could lay up.

(c) The cover must be such as can be easily beaten ; that is to say, not consisting of impenetrable thorn jungles, such as the "wait-a-bit" thorn, the cane-brake or *berri*, which, when matted with grass and other undergrowth, make the cover absolutely impenetrable to beaters, though animals, having tunnelled their "runs" under the thorns, can move about in such cover without difficulty, where it would be impossible for human beings to attempt to do the same. I know of such places in the Doon (Dehra) and in parts of Chanda where the country for hundreds of square miles is covered with enormous extents of this fearfully dense and matted thorn bush ; these areas simply swarm with game of all kinds, in particular with cheetle and tigers (in Chanda with also bison and wild buffaloes), the reason being that in such covers they are inaccessible to their human enemies, for it is a physical impossibility to beat them out of it.

Sportsmen are advised to keep clear of such places, or only to work on the outskirts of them. That is to say, the sportsman should in such cases proceed to find some other good but "workable" cover and water situated in the neighbourhood of the thorny refuge of the tigers ; not too close, say, about two miles off. Here he should tie out his buff ; and the chances are that within a few nights, during their nightly peregrinations, the tigers will probably come across the

buff and kill it. Finding good cover and water near their kill, they will then not take the trouble to return immediately to their thorny refuge, but will lie up close to their kill on the following day.

- (d) Do not tie your kill in the neighbourhood (not within five miles of such) of any caves in which the tigers will be able to take refuge during the beat on the following day, for it is often impossible to turn them out of such places, where they will remain till nightfall, when the baffled sportsman will have to leave them.
- (e) The spot selected must be situated near cover which is not habitually disturbed by grazing of cattle, cutting of wood, grass, etc., for the tiger is sure to be acquainted with the fact, and would of course refuse to lay up in the neighbourhood of his kill where, by experience, he is well aware that he would be disturbed on the day following. Some of the more experienced tigers get to know very well that a beat for them on the following day is a necessary sequence to their having killed an animal on the night previous which had been *tied*, so that, though they may kill and eat a tied animal, they make it a principle to clear out of that portion of the jungle immediately afterwards, knowing full well by past experience, that after having killed and eaten an animal which they have found tied in the jungles, that jungle will be beaten and disturbed on the following day by that strange species of apes whom they dread so much. In the case of such tigers, the remains of their natural kills must be sought for—if not, that of a wild animal, then a herd of domestic cattle must be *driven* into the haunts of the tiger in order to allow him to kill one of them.
- (f) The jungle to be beaten on the following day must be so situated, that there is a good *lead* of cover from it to another jungle to which the tiger would have no objection to being driven.

## II.—Manner of Tying.

- (a) The bait should be tied by either the hind or fore leg (above the fetlock) and not by the horns or neck as illustrated in Mr. Saunderson's book. It stands to reason



that a rope round the horns or neck is an unnatural sight in the jungles, and as tigers are always very suspicious of traps, this in most cases is enough to make even an unsophisticated tiger suspicious, while in the case of an experienced tiger nothing in the world would induce him to touch such a bait. On the other hand, if the bait is tied by the leg, the attachment is practically out of sight, or, if noticed at all, would pass for a piece of weed.

- (b) Care should be taken in tying the rope round the fetlock that it does not cause unnecessary suffering to the animal by galling it as so often happens when the unfortunate brute is tied out night after night by the same leg without meeting its fate. Either change the leg frequently, or tie a light bandage of dark-coloured cloth and tie the rope over that.

Be careful to tie the animal on a level piece of ground and not on the side of a bank; for in the latter case the animal will frequently, in its struggles, topple over to the full extent of its rope and hang down in an awkward position down the bank, and being unable to again recover its feet, will be found choked to death in the morning. I have personally seen this happen.

- (c) The rope with which the bait is tied should be only strong enough to prevent the bait itself breaking it during the night, but not so strong that the tiger will not be able to break it.

If the tiger is unable to break the rope and drag away his kill, and thereby fails to show the *direction* in which he is lying up, the sportsman may as well stay at home, for he will have nothing to indicate to him as to in which direction to beat. It is a very common mistake to tie the bait so strongly that the tiger is unable to break the rope, in which case, as I have already said, the sportsman may as well stay at home.

If, however, the tiger is able to break the rope, he will drag his kill in the direction of the cover which best *pleases* him, and he is therefore more likely to stay by it on the following day; moreover, the broad trail or "drag" on the ground, made by the carcass of the

kill having been dragged by the tiger (it is for this reason that the bait should be heavy enough to oblige the tiger to drag it and not lift it clean off the ground in his mouth), will clearly indicate to the sportsman the direction of the cover which the tiger has of his own accord chosen to lie up in. On the other hand, if the tiger is unable to break the rope, the fact that he is unable to drag away his kill, as he is accustomed to do with his natural kills, would at once make him suspicious, with the probable result that he would forsake the kill for good as soon as he had satisfied his hunger on it; while moreover, not being able to drag away the remains and hide them, he knows that the vultures would leave him nothing of it by the evening. Even if the tiger did happen to elect to remain on the following day somewhere in the neighbourhood of his kill, having no drag to indicate the direction in which the tiger had gone, the sportsman would be unable to locate him with any degree of certainty, for in thick cover—over grass, leaves or rocks—the soft pads of a tiger leave no marks.

My experience is that when tigers fail to break the rope of their kill, they almost invariably go long distances away from the kill, so that the sportsman, having nothing to guide him, will be unable to make up his mind whether to beat the blocks of jungle lying to the north, south, east or west of the kill, while a single mistake of course will spoil all the other chances of a successful beat for the rest of the day, should the tiger happen to have been within hearing distance of the first beat.

In parts of India the natives are in the habit of using, in the place of a proper rope, a good imitation (as long as it is green) made from creepers (bale), barks of certain trees (buckle), or young bamboos; the latter they crush with the back of an axe and then twist the fibre into a rope. Those kinds of rope are very strong indeed in their green state, especially the rope made from bamboo which even an elephant could hardly break; they are made in a few moments on the spot, for the materials in the jungles are always at hand, and for this reason natives will usually not take the trouble to take out a proper rope with them. So the sportsman must see to this point himself and insist on a proper rope being taken and used, though, on the other hand, it is by no means necessary to use too

thin a rope, for it must be remembered that a tiger has enormous power and could snap a rope which perhaps even six men could not break.

- (d) The bait should be tied as far as possible in a clear spot, with no kind of obstruction near it, under the cover of which the bait could lie down and hide. The root of a tree is the best, provided the root is well away from the trunk of the tree. If a peg is used, it should consist of a stout stake four feet in length with a hook at the end to prevent the rope slipping off it; this should be sunk at least three feet into the ground, and then well rammed round with stones, in order to make it so firm that the tiger cannot possibly pull it out of the ground while breaking the rope, for if he pulls up the peg with the rope, the bumping and jumping of the dangling peg as it is dragged along in the cover is very apt to scare the tiger and cause him to drop and forsake his kill. In sandy soil, instead of a peg, a deep hole with curved sides, may be dug, and a bush or a branch embedded in it with one end of the rope attached to it, which can then be covered over and the hole filled up firmly and wedged with stones, sticks and sand.

Again, it is easier to break a piece of string that is long enough to be jerked than a piece of the same string that is too short to be jerked. Also, our object in tying the kill is that the tiger should be able to break the rope and take it away to show us the direction in which he has gone; therefore, do not tie the bait by a rope that is so short that the tiger is unable to get a *jerk* on to it and break it. If left to themselves, natives are very apt to tie the leg of the bait too close to the peg, with perhaps only four inches of rope between it and the peg. On the other hand, too long a piece will get the bait into trouble by getting wound round his other legs or some other object; about twenty inches between the peg and the leg is about the right length and sufficient to enable the tiger to get the necessary jerk on it and break it, though he might have failed to do so with only a straight pull—to the ultimate disappointment and disgust of the waiting sportsman. These are little things, but a very great deal depends on them.

### III.—*Sites for "kills."*

- (a) Having selected the locality within which the bait is to be tied, we have now to determine the actual spot at which it is to be tied.

One hears a lot about the powers of scent of a tiger. In my opinion his powers of scent are *nil*, or at any rate not one bit better than that of civilized human beings; and this also stands to reason. Civilized human beings, have only inferior powers of scent simply because they have no essential cause to use them; the same reason holds good with the tiger. Other wild animals have to rely for their safety on the keenness of their powers of scent, consequently with them these powers are constantly in play and are therefore maintained at the highest pitch of excellency; but the tiger being well aware that the only enemy he has cause to fear is normally not abroad at night, so at night the tiger is veritably lord of all he surveys and fears no creature other than man. He is also not a scent-hunting animal, for his other powers are so great that he can in his hunts generally pick and choose his dinner when and where he pleases. Therefore, having no use for the exercise of his powers of scent, these powers in him are very dull indeed, comparatively speaking, exactly the same as in the case of civilized human beings. I have myself seen the footmarks of a tiger pass by (without the slightest signs of hesitation or halting), a small bush on the further side of which a fat young buff was lying quite quietly; which showed clearly that the tiger was unable to smell even a strong-smelling animal, such as a buff is, even at a distance of five feet.

Some years ago I was chumming with a man who had a tame tiger and also some panther cubs; in the compound of our house there was a patch of grass up to, and in and out of, which we used to drag the inside of a sheep, for the purpose of making the tiger and panthers respectively hunt the trail. The panthers at once put their noses to the trail and scented up the drag till they found their dinner; but the tiger, the fool, never put his nose to the trail, but, knowing that his dinner was to be found somewhere within the patch of grass, would go bounding round and round in circles with his head held high—looking for it with his eyes and not with his nose—so that we frequently saw him actually pass right over his dinner without smelling or seeing it.

I have also frequently seen this illustrated in their wild state, panthers invariably scenting up the drag of their kills when it had been removed, but I cannot recall a single instance of ever having seen a tiger do so, though I have frequently seen them wander round more or less aimlessly about in circles looking for their removed kill.

As for an old tiger scenting a sportsman up in a tree, as we so often read of, I consider the suggestion absurd.

On the other hand, he is extremely quick of sight and of hearing, even to the extent of hearing the breathing or even heart-beats of an excited sportsman up in a tree on a silent night.

It is undoubtedly to these two extremely highly developed powers that he depends, not only to warn him of a possible danger, but also to enable him to procure his dinner.

To give his powers of hearing and sight full play, a tiger at night never forces his way through dense cover, unless of course he has already marked the position of his quarry and is in the act of stalking it. Being at night the monarch of all he surveys, rather than face all the unpleasantness of having to force his way through a lot of dew-sodden undergrowth or grass, the tiger naturally selects the easiest and most open courses, such as the open beds of rivers, footpaths, roads, fire and check-lines, etc. By doing so, he not only avoids the dew-sodden undergrowth, but also commands a more extensive view, which enables him to see or hear his prey at a distance, before they scent his own presence, so that he is thus better able to make his plans to stalk them.

On such places his footprints are to be clearly seen, so that all his favourite nightly promenades are well known to the local men.

It is now clear that in selecting a spot for the bait, that spot must, other conditions being satisfactory, be as far as possible an *open* one, such as a cross road or other open place usually promenaded at night by the local tiger, and from whence the bait can be seen at a distance, as far as possible from all sides, for it must be remembered that when animals are tied out at night as baits in the forests, they know their danger instinctively, and consequently at nightfall they lie down and remain as quiet as a mouse all night without a sound or a move, except occasionally when they shake their ears or head in knocking off mosquitoes or gnats. .

(b) In some districts the forests are so vast and dense, as in Mundla, that it is often impossible to find any such open spot, which is also conveniently situated otherwise as a site for a kill. In such forests the tigers simply use the narrow tracks made in these forests by other wild animals; and as there are thousands of such tracks in every direction, it is often impossible to say which one the tiger is likely to use on any specific night. Here an ordinary wooden bell of the type usually worn by cattle may be brought into use.

It must be remembered that almost every tiger in existence will have at some time or other made his acquaintance with domestic cattle, at any rate in the tracks with which this book is dealing, and in consequence is familiar with the bells which the leaders of every herd of such cattle wear and probably associates the sound with the memory of many a juicy beef-dinner.

These bells can be heard at a great distance, and serve the double purpose of guiding the herd and also attracting the tiger to them. This fact can be utilized with great effect by sportsmen working in dense forests, for all he has to do is to tie one of these wooden bells round the neck of the bait, and every time the latter shakes his head in knocking off the mosquitoes, the familiar sound of the bell will be sent echoing on the still night air across hill and dale, hearing which the keen-eared old tiger on the hillside, perhaps a mile away, will hurry down to hunt up what he considers to be some belated cattle that have strayed from the herd.

A metal bell, however, should not be used, for the metallic ring appears to jar the nerves of a tiger and makes him hesitate, as occurred in one case in my experience, when a metal bell was placed on the neck of one of my baits: the bell attracted the tiger up to within a certain distance of the kill, but beyond that he refused to come; and after hanging about the bait all night he eventually left it untouched.

Natives when leading cattle wearing bells are frequently in the habit of stuffing up the bells with grass or leaves, in order not to be annoyed by the constant sound; they often do this when taking an animal to tie out as a bait, and then omit to release the bell by taking out the obstruction.

*IV.—Baits or "kills."*

As baits may be used young buffs, bullocks, or ponies, and at a pinch even a pig or a donkey; but the two latter are too small, for besides leaving no drag—for the tiger would lift it clean off the ground in his mouth—there would not be enough left of the carcase, after the first feed, to induce the tiger to lie up near his kill on the following day, with the object of having a second feed on the remains in the evening.

I have noticed at times that a tigress with cubs, for some peculiar reason, much prefers a pony to any other kind of bait. But taking it all round, there is nothing a tiger likes so much as a nice fat young buffalo about eighteen months old; so the sportsman must see that his buffs are not younger than about fifteen to eighteen months old, otherwise they will be too small, in which case, besides leaving little or no drag, they will be wasted by being killed systematically by every wretched little pantheret that happens to pass by. On the other hand, the buff must not be too old or large, for a tiger after all is a very cowardly beast and has a great respect for a full grown buffalo. In fact they are in a blue funk of them and will give them a wide berth if the buff is capable of showing any appearance of putting up anything like a decent fight for his life; even a calf of six months invariably faces a feline with a lowered head, so that when an older and larger buff does this and pretends to rush at the advancing tiger, the prestige of his race is often sufficient to cause the tiger to relinquish his intentions regarding him and seek his dinner in safer quarters elsewhere, to the disappointment of the careless sportsman who tied out too large a buff.

I have known a 2½-year-old buff tied up in this manner as a bait, who successfully bluffed and kept off a tiger throughout the whole of one night. A buff of eighteen months or under, however, presents no difficulties to a tiger.

The female buffalo is much valued in India on account of the great quantities of very rich milk which it gives; apart from this these animals are utterly useless, for, being unable to stand the heat of the sun, they are of no use as beasts of burden in any way, invariably lying down at the first water and refusing to budge. So the male buffalo is of no use whatever, except as sires for breeding purposes,

when one bull to fifty cows suffices, the remaining forty-nine male calves out of every fifty being either knocked on the head at birth, or sold to the Chamars for a few annas to be slaughtered and eaten before they get too old and tough for the purpose. Consequently sportsmen can always obtain young male buffs suitable for his purpose very cheaply everywhere, at about Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 each.

It must be remembered that a tiger in his full strength is a very fastidious beast indeed, for it is in his power to pick and choose his dinner as he pleases, and will therefore refuse to kill any decrepit or diseased animals, except when driven to do so by hunger, which is a rare occurrence.

Some sportsmen think to save their pockets by buying up only old and decrepit animals to be tied out as baits for tigers.

I once met such a one in Mysore, who complained bitterly to me that though the tigers in a certain locality were numerous, they yet refused to touch his baits. I visited this locality myself soon afterwards, and on tying up nice fat young buffs, I found that I had no difficulty whatever in obtaining kills, for they were snapped up at once by the tigers, six of whom I shot there in one month: while by local enquiry I learnt that my predecessor here had bought up as cheap baits for tigers all the old and diseased cattle he could find in the bazaars, with the result that these tigers, who had plenty of wild game around them, absolutely refused to look twice at these creatures thus insultingly offered them.

On hundreds of occasions during my career as a Forest Officer I have seen the remains of cattle that have been killed by tigers out of herds that were grazing in the forests for which, in my official capacity, I had given out licenses, and in every case it was generally the fattest animal of the herd which had been deliberately selected and killed by the tiger, often a fat young heifer in young, showing that the tiger had deliberately picked out his prey from among all the rest as the best. On one occasion I saw the whole proceedings from start to finish of a tiger deliberately selecting and stalking the fattest heifer of a herd of cattle, and kill it in broad daylight in front of my eyes; this occurred at Cherrapatla in the Hoshangabad District.

I trust I have now driven home the point that tigers *do* discriminate between an animal that is in good condition and the one that is



bad, and it stands to reason that they will not take the trouble to kill an animal that is unfit for food when they have so much fat game around them to choose from.

*V.—Inspection of kills.*

(a) For this purpose the sportsman should send out *together* two parties.

(b) One of these two parties, which we will call for reference, the first party, should consist of four of the sportsman's own private men, as differentiated from men hired locally on the shooting ground, whom we will for the above reason call respectively A, B, C and D; A being the Head Shikari trained personally by the sportsman himself, B the Assistant Shikari, and C and D two orderlies.

(c) The second party should also consist of four men, E, F, G and H, of whom only E need be a privately trained man of the sportsman, while the other three can be hired coolies of the locality of the shooting ground. The duty of this second party is only to accompany the first and more important party and to collect as they proceed on their rounds of inspecting the various buffs that have been tied out overnight, all the buffs that have not been killed, and when the last buff has been inspected, to drive them to camp, thus leaving the first party free to devote themselves entirely to more important work should one of the buffs prove to have been killed by the tiger.

(d) The duty of the first party is to accompany the second party until they happen to come on to one of the buffs that may have been killed overnight; when A, the Head Shikari, should halt his own party and then send on the second party to collect and take back to camp all the remaining buffs tied out in other directions, taking care in doing so that they will not disturb the tiger in the neighbourhood of his present kill. He should then carefully note the following points:—

- (1) the footmarks to see whether there are one or more tigers and whether male or female, taking their measurements with a piece of grass;

- (2) the *direction* of the drag ;
- (3) the estimated number of men likely to be required to beat the particular cover in the direction of which the tiger has dragged the kill ;
- (4) the direction of the water ; if he has not already made himself acquainted with this information, he should do so from the local men F, G or H of the second party before he sends them off.

On no account must the drag be followed up now for fear of disturbing the tiger.

After having ascertained all these and any other necessary facts on the spot, A should leave B, the Assistant Shikari, to carry out his own duties on the spot in conjunction with C and D, the two orderlies, while he himself hastens with all speed to camp where he will report all the facts in detail to his master.

- (e) On the departure of A from the scene of the kill, the remaining three men of his party should proceed to take up their respective positions in that portion of the jungles, where they will maintain a silent watch for some three or four hours until the sportsman arrives on the scene in person—this in order to prevent any interested persons from entering the jungles in the meanwhile for the purpose of driving away the tiger. B will take up his post on a tree about two hundred yards in the rear of the spot where the kill had taken place, from whence he can watch and prevent any persons trying to get at the remains of the kill. C and D will take up two other posts, so that the positions of the three men will together make more or less an equilateral triangle with the supposed position of the tiger lying at about the centre of that triangle, each of the sides of the triangle being about a mile in length. From these three points these men will maintain a silent watch, and on no account will make any noise or smoke ; they will prevent, and if possible stop, any intruder ; and will particularly note the direction of the calls of all wild animals as denoting the presence or movements on the part of the tiger in the directions of such calls. Should

either C or D at any time become aware by these sounds that the tiger has changed his quarters or has moved out of the jungle in a certain direction, he should at once proceed to and notify B of the fact.

When the sportsman arrives on the scene of the kill, B should report to him in full all that has occurred, especially the directions of the calls of wild animals as indicating the movements of and the present position of the tiger.

By these means all interference will be prevented, which, as I have said before, is certainly half the battle, for when such people learn of the precautions which the sportsman habitually and systematically maintains, they will be too afraid of being caught red-handed by some silent watcher seated up in a tree, so that they will not dare to enter so carefully guarded a forest.

The reader will be making a great and fatal mistake if he neglects these precautions as being too elaborate to be practicable. If the sportsman's private men have faith in their master's capabilities and industry, as they very soon will if he shows himself worthy of it, they will in their own interest carry out his instructions with sufficient accuracy to ensure success.

That these precautions *are* absolutely essential to success, I can emphatically assure my readers. Even as one of the District Officers and head of one of the Government Departments of the District, with great local influence as District Forest Officer and with almost everything at my command, I have found it absolutely essential to utilize these precautions in order to checkmate the machinations of various local oppositions, especially those of the subordinates of other Government Departments. So what chance of success has any outside sportsman got, when the District Officers are treated in this manner, except that of a most outside fluke, unless he adopts such precautions. It is for the want of these very precautions that so many sportsmen so often fail, working as they often are in complete ignorance of even the necessity for such precautions.

(f) A tiger should never be disturbed while he is still at his kill, for it is very apt to make him suspicious and to clear

off out of the jungle at once in consequence. For this reason the kill should not be visited by the shikari too early.

Tigers usually retire finally from their kills about sunrise or a little before. In winter the sun usually rises at about 6-30 A.M., so that if the shikari who is going to inspect the kill leaves camp in winter at 6-30 A.M., and arrives on the scene of the kill (which should not be more than at most four miles away) an hour later, it will usually be safe enough, and will enable him to return to camp with the news by 8-30 A.M., which is quite early enough in winter.

In summer the shikari should leave the camp before daybreak, even at the risk of disturbing the tiger at his kill; but in the summer the tiger cannot afford usually to desert the locality so easily as he can in winter, on account of the scarcity of water and the intensity of the heat.

*VJ.—The Beat (in detail).*

- (a) If the sportsman has good reason to believe that he will find a kill in the morning, he should have the beaters collected at his camp overnight. The work of collecting of beaters is much more easily and better done in the evening than at any other time of the day, for in the evening the villagers will all have knocked off from their day's work and will be found at their homes at which time if they are notified that they will be required for a whole day's outing on the following day, they can make all their arrangements, such as for the disposal of the work they had intended to do on the following day, the preparation of their food to be taken with them on their persons to last them throughout the next day which they will spend in the jungles, etc., etc. In this way they will come willingly and contentedly and look upon the outing as a pleasant and exciting change; whereas if they are suddenly commanded without notice in the morning, when they are engaged on their private occupations in their fields, etc., without being given time to make arrangements for the proper conduct of their own work, or for a proper supply of food to be taken with them, they will naturally be very

surly and discontented throughout the day, instead of looking on the outing as a pleasure trip as they would otherwise have done, and unwilling work means bad work.

If a hundred men will be required, the best plan is to send out in the evening five orderlies to five different villages in the neighbourhood, with orders for each orderly to obtain twenty able-bodied men from the headman of each village, and after giving the men sufficient time at their village to make their arrangements regarding their food, etc., to return with them to camp overnight. In this manner it is very easy to collect a hundred willing men, whereas if the orderlies set out to do this in the morning they will find it very difficult then to obtain any men at all, for by that time most of the villagers will be scattered out in their fields or in the jungles cutting wood, etc., so will not be easily found, while in the evening each man will be at home in his house.

The orderlies who are sent out to collect men should wear some kind of private uniform, the more striking the latter is the more influence it will carry, and more easily and effectively will they be able to carry out their work. These orderlies should be particularly instructed to be very careful in selecting their men and on no account to bring any of the deaf, blind, old or maimed, for such have been the cause of many an accident in tiger-shooting.

If when having collected the beaters overnight in this manner the sportsman finds in the morning that there has been no kill during the night, he should at once pay in person each of the men collected half of the day's wages and dismiss them without any delay, and he will find that they will willingly come again on the same terms.

(b) Previous, however, to the news of the kill being brought into camp by the shikari, the sportsman will be up at sunrise, and will see carefully to all the details regarding his rifles, cartridges, shooting-ladder, tiffin-basket, etc.

(c) The beaters, one hundred men, should then be carefully inspected, and all the old, halt, blind, or any that may be suspicious-looking and undesirable should be weeded out and sent home.

- (d) The remainder should be marshalled in double rank, and each man given a gun-wad with a serial number, the date, a serial number and the sportsman's initials marked on it, to be given up again by them at the end of the day in lieu of payment.
- (e) Then forty of the most intelligent men, with good hearing and sight, should be specially selected to act as stops, twenty for the right wing and twenty for the left, particular care being taken that none of the men selected for this most important and delicate work are suspicious persons, the Head Shikari being made personally responsible for the character of each stop selected as such, for being a native himself he is much more likely to know at sight whether a person is worthy of trust or not. To these stops for the present should be allotted the carrying of all the articles which are to accompany the sportsman's person throughout the day, such as his shooting-ladder, tiffin-basket, etc.

The hundred men should now be arranged in the following order, in double rank as a company in line:—

Numbering from the right, sections Nos. 1 and 2 of twenty men in each are respectively the Right and Left wings of the stops, each man with his load, if any, by the side of him; sections Nos. 3 and 4 of thirty men in each section are the Right and Left wings respectively of the beaters.

Each of the four sections must be in the individual charge of an orderly, while the company should be under and superintended by a fifth or Chief Orderly, who should always bring up the rear when the company is proceeding in file, in order to prevent any lagging or breaking of ranks without permission at any time.

All this will take some time and trouble at first until the sportsman's personal orderlies grasp the idea and learn exactly what is required. But if the sportsman is up early he will have ample time to make all these arrangements before the Head Shikari returns with the news of the kill: while if the orderlies have already learnt the details of what is required, they will be able to carry out all this work themselves without necessitating the sportsman's presence.

The introduction of this rough preliminary discipline at the commencement will save an endless amount of annoyance and trouble throughout the day, by eliminating all unnecessary confusion and noise.

Once finally arranged, the four sections in line should be kept quietly seated in double rank, until the shikari returns with the news regarding the kill, no man being allowed in the meanwhile to break ranks on any pretence, without the special permission of the Chief Orderly in charge of the company. The sportsman should then address the assembled company and promise them double wages in the event of the tiger being brought successfully before the gun, and severe punishment for any man reported by the orderlies for slackness or disobedience.

If the Head Shikari returns with the news of a kill, all the sportsman will now have to do is to jump on his horse and lead the way with the shikari before him to show him the road, giving the company, as he does so, the order "Into file, right turn, quick march," or words to that effect, when the section orderlies will at once turn each man of his double rank section to the right in file, and make them proceed one behind the other, keeping each man strictly in his place, with no talking in ranks permitted, while the Chief Orderly will bring up the rear in company with two of the stops carrying the long bamboo shooting-ladder so that the latter may not break the ranks of the men in front.

More luxurious kinds of *machans* can of course be used, but they are a nuisance and cause too much noise in being put up. The most handy kind for beating purposes in the jungles is an ordinary ladder made of bamboo of twenty feet or more in length, with a stout cushion fixed on one of the rungs at a height of about sixteen feet from the ground; if seated lower than this there is a likelihood of the tiger spotting the sportsman and perhaps knocking the latter from his perch when he is wounded.

But we are anticipating. The news of the kill has not yet arrived, so having placed his company in double rank, told off the sections allotted to each man his duty, and completed all other necessary arrangements, the sportsman will probably seat himself in an arm-chair in front of his tent and try to look unconcerned, though in

reality watching eagerly in the direction in which the shikari is expected to appear with the all-important news. There is now a feeling of suppressed excitement in the air and everybody in camp is in painful suspense as to the expected news.

But this kind of feeling is only engendered when the knowledge exists that, if a kill is reported, the arrangements are such that final success is practically a certainty and the tiger is almost sure to be brought into camp in the evening. The faith and spirits of our men have also been further strengthened by the gift, at the sportsman's expense, of a goat and some coconuts to be offered as a sacrifice to the local deity, and by the gift of two or three rupees to the local Brahmin priest in order to secure his prayers and blessings on our behalf. We now only await the arrival of the news. Will it never come?

Some one suddenly shouts "*arta hai*" (he is coming),—at once there is a stir and a buzz of excitement in camp and speculation is rife as to the verdict.

It is true, and he is bringing in news of a kill too, for there is no mistaking old Dummeri's strut even at half a mile when he is bringing in news of a kill; chest out, head thrown back, and arms and body swinging as if the whole place belonged to him—very different to the bent head and generally dejected appearance of a whipped dog which he adopts when he is bringing in bad news.

He arrives at last, striving hard to compose his beaming countenance to a state more befitting the dignity of the occasion: "*Han hazur, gara ho-gya, arp ke ekbal so*" (Yes, my lord, destiny has been accomplished, owing to the influence of your honour's good fortune). "*Yes it is a huge male tiger, with a footmark likè that of an elephant. I am not exaggerating hazur* (seeing a smile); *I have never told a lie in my life! Yes, he is all alone, at least I did not see the footmarks of any other tigers. He has dragged the kill into some very thick cover towards the north. No, the water is to the south of the kill. Yes, he went and drank water at the pool and his footmarks here show that he again retired towards the north. I left the Assistant Shikari and the two orderlies to keep silent watch round the portion of the jungle in which the tiger is lying; they will report the results*



on your honour's arrival at the scene of the kill. Let us hasten." This news is excellent, so I will now take the liberty of asking the reader to be my companion in all that follows.

Having everything in readiness we now start off at once, say at 9 A.M., leading the way on our horses with Dummeri in front to show us the right way, with the hundred men in double file coming along behind us, all talking and breaking of ranks being forbidden.

Besides these hundred men, however, we will also have ten well-trained private men of our own to help us in the coming operations, namely, five orderlies at present in charge of the company in the rear, three men keeping silent watch around the lair of the tiger, Dummeri, the Head Shikari, and a spare orderly carrying a rifle for emergencies just behind our horses. Thus we proceed quietly for about an hour, when we halt at a distance of about six hundred yards to the south of the scene of the kill, arriving, say, at 10 A.M. Leaving the horses and all the men in charge with the Chief Orderly to await our return, with strict orders against talking and smoking, we load our rifles (keep these now always at half-cock and safety for fear of an accident which would spoil the whole show) and proceed on foot to inspect the kill, taking with us only the Head Shikari to show us the way and the spare orderly to carry a spare gun.

We must proceed very quietly indeed and only speak in whispers, for this part of the work is very ticklish. The assistant Shikari who is keeping silent watch from a tree in the neighbourhood of the kill now discovers and joins us; and a whispered conversation ensues, in which he gives a detailed account of all that has occurred during his watch. His report is probably something as follows:—"Up to half an hour ago the animals were calling on the southern slopes and on top of the little plateau half a mile to the north of us, after which the cries in that direction ceased, but were again taken up in the direction of the little dell to the west of the plateau, since when all has been quiet." This may be translated as follows: As soon as the sun had risen sufficiently the tiger went up on the southern slopes of the hill, or on top of the plateau, in order to dry himself in the sun of the effects of the dew-sodden cover below, but later when he had dried himself and found the rays of the sun becoming too strong to

be altogether pleasant, he changed his quarters again and came down into the denser cover of the shady dell, where by this time the dew has probably dried, and where he has made himself comfortable for the day and has gone to sleep.

Thus tigers are very fond of going up on to the slopes of the hills or on to the plateau above in the earlier portion of a winter's morning at which time they are generally lying right out in the open, away from undergrowth cover for the sake of obtaining the sun, and it is probably because at this time they are exposed to full view out in the open that they like to be on high grounds from whence they can view in time the approach of a possible enemy; but later on, when the sun becomes too strong for them in these exposed places, they seek the denser cover and shade, perhaps in some nook on the shady or north side of the hill side or in the denser grass cover in the valley below, possibly quite close to their kill.

The report so far is excellent, and we will probably find our friend at home when we beat for him.

On inspecting the scene of the kill our eyes are gladdened by the sight of the footprints of an enormous old male tiger; the track is from the north, down the open bed of the ualla to within forty yards of where the buff had been tied, from whence he apparently for the first time spotted his prey, for here his footprints immediately strike off at right angles through a little depression in the sand, behind a patch of grass and then in the rear of a bush within twenty feet of the buff; here the ground is deeply scratched in two places showing that the tiger had taken off from this spot in his spring on the buff. The rope is snapped, the frayed end of the broken piece is still attached to the root to which the buff was tied. Close by is a dark and wet patch covered with blue-bottles, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the blood of the sacrifice. This first sight of blood at once excites the primeval instincts of the hunter and goes to our head like the fumes of strong wine.

From this spot there is a broad trail or "drag" on the ground about three feet in width, along which the earth and stones are displaced, and the grass all lying flat on the ground in a forward direction, mostly smeared with smudges of dark blood with patches or pools of blood here and there on the way.

It may now be necessary to follow this drag to make quite certain that the tiger, being a large one, has not taken the kill further than they do ordinarily, for I have known a big tiger on a few, but very few, occasions to take his kill clean away over hill and dale for over two miles, and so upset all the calculations of the sportsman who had thought that as usual the tiger had not taken away his kill at most more than a couple of hundred yards.

We therefore follow the broad well-marked trail of the drag, proceeding slowly and silently with our rifles in our hands (but still at half-cock for fear of their going off accidentally and spoiling everything) in case the tiger might appear suddenly and perhaps give a standing shot, when we would save all further trouble by knocking him over where he stands; but, as a rule, it is bad business to come across the tiger in this manner, for in such cases all the sportsman usually sees of the tiger is a flash of his tawny hide as he vanishes at full speed into the cover, probably to clear straight out of the jungle before the arrangements for the beat can be got ready. Therefore we must proceed very, very carefully so as not to disturb the tiger if possible.

After following this tragic trail through the undergrowth of the jungle for some sixty yards, we suddenly come on a spot under the dark shade of a dense overhanging bush where the tiger has evidently stopped to have a meal, for the ground here is strewn with splinters of bone and pools of dark blood covered with swarms of flies, on one side of which is a heap of dark-green matter neatly packed together, which, on closer inspection, proves to be the contents of the buffalo's stomach, which the tiger has cleaned out as neatly as any trained butcher.

But the trail of the drag does not stop here, which shows that the tiger has again picked up the remains of the carcase and dragged it on, probably with the object of concealing it in a better place where it will not be so easily found and devoured by vultures, etc.

The presence of the vultures, however, show that these precautions have failed, for the presence of the swarms of flies have betrayed the hiding place to the crows, who in turn have betrayed their discovery to the vultures. The fact that these birds are all seated up on top of the trees and not on the ground round the carcase as they would

ordinarily be had they no cause to fear, shows that they have good reason to believe that the tiger is quite near the remains of his kill, and therefore liable to rush them, when he might kill half a dozen vultures with a right and left smack with his paws, for vultures are very clumsy birds and invariably have to run a few paces before they can rise on their wings into the air. That tigers do succeed in killing them sometimes in this manner I have seen proved on one or two occasions, when I have found the dead bodies of freshly-killed vultures lying by the side of a tiger's kill. So it happens that the vultures have to wait their chance seated on the neighbouring trees, spending their time in quarrelling among themselves in shrill, grating voices something like that of a foal, as they bump against and dislodge each other in turn from their precarious perches, or skim round in circles low down over the trees peering down as if to locate the presence of their lurking foe whom they so much dread, while perhaps one or two of the more daring and hungry ones may venture nervously down to the carcase and taking a few hurried snatches at it, flounder up again into the air as if in a great hurry.

Seeing the vultures acting in this manner, we should proceed no further for fear of disturbing the tiger, but should beat a careful and silent retreat, if we had not already done so in the first instance from the scene of the kill.

However, in the present case, we will assume that there are no such signs to indicate the presence of the tiger actually by his kill, so we will, out of curiosity, proceed to inspect it, though it is now no longer necessary to do so, nor as a rule advisable.

The action of the vultures, however, shows us that the tiger is certainly not within a hundred yards of his kill, so we advance, perhaps another hundred yards, when suddenly we come in sight of a heaving, dirty, mud-coloured mass, dotted here and there with black, from which a portion now and again breaks away, which proves to be a vulture, the black ones with the red throats and white ruffs being the handsome king-vultures, while the grey ones are the disgusting looking ordinary vultures. Among the surging mass not a single head is to be seen, every head is buried deep in the entrails of the carcase, on top of which this disgusting mass is heaving, jostling, fighting,

screaming and gobbling at their repulsive feast, individuals only breaking away now and again when threatened with death by suffocation.

As we approach, the disgusting bald heads and necks are withdrawn, and the mass begins to break up and individual birds take to lumbering flight, though some of the hungry ones on the outskirts having been hitherto denied a share by the crush, seize the opportunity to rush in for a few hasty snatches before they, too, take to flight.

We find that the tiger has eaten the greater portion of both the hind-quarters, the remainder of the kill being practically untouched, except where the vultures have been at work. Panthers, as a rule, except the very large ones, generally commence eating from the elc and fore-quarters of their kill; a tiger never does this. The vertebrae of the neck is broken, and the neck is pierced, both at the back of the neck and below, by large holes made by the fangs of the tiger, each hole being large enough to allow the middle finger to be inserted into it. The holes made by the fangs of a panther are mere pinpricks, which hardly admit the insertion of the point of a pencil, while the back and shoulders of an animal killed by a panther are usually, especially if the animal is a big one, much torn about by the claws, which is not so in the case of a tiger's kill, which is cleanly done.

If cubs are present, the hind leg of the kill will frequently be found to be broken, the idea being to disable the animal and then to play with it alive for the edification of the cubs, while the nose, ears and eyes will invariably be found much gnawed and torn by the cubs.

There is a native superstition regarding the direction in which the head of the kill is found to be pointing, which is supposed by them to indicate the direction in which the tiger intends to lie up after leaving it. I must say that I have very often found this idea to be correct, the reason probably being that the tiger always drags its kill by the neck, and as he usually drags it in the direction in which he intends to lie up, the head in consequence will usually be found pointing in that direction when the tiger has deposited it in its final hiding place.

Before finally leaving their kill, tigers usually make an attempt to cover over the top of it, with their forepaws, all the leaves and grass within convenient reach; usually this job is very carelessly and

insufficiently done, but on occasions I have found the carcase so well covered with leaves and grass, that even the vultures had failed to discover it.

I have gone thus into detail in order to bring to notice a few points of woodcraft, which it is necessary for the sportsman to know.

If all has been well and the cover is thick, the tiger may be within a hundred yards of the spot where he last left his kill, or at most within eight hundred yards of it and in the direction pointed to by the drag. So in ordinary cases a line of beaters extending over a mile and a half with its centre in line with the position of the kill will be ample to cover the whole of the area within which the tiger is probably lying. A mile and a half is 2,640 yards and, sixty beaters 45 yards apart cover 2,700 yards, so that sixty beaters are ample for the purpose. We now know exactly where the remains of the kill is lying, and it was to make quite sure of this point that we followed the drag in the manner we did; but sportsmen should only do this when there is no other means of locating with *certainly* the spot where the kill has been finally deposited, or when for some other reason there is a liability of the tiger having dragged the kill beyond the area of the proposed beat; for, as I mentioned before, I have known tigers to take their kill to a distance of over two miles from the spot where they killed it; but this is a rare occurrence and happens only when the local cover had been bad, water too far away, or when the animal killed had been too small and light, though occasionally I have known a very large tiger to take even a large and heavy kill for over a mile. To examine the remains of a kill in person is also a great check on the possibilities of treachery. Ordinarily, however, if the kill is of fair size and weight, such as a two-year-old buff in good condition, the tiger will not take it more than a couple of hundred yards, or at most four hundred yards, while often, I might say generally, if the cover is good, he will not trouble to take it more than forty yards. In such cases the sportsman will usually have no difficulty in locating the kill by the action of the vultures, or of locating the presence of the tiger in its neighbourhood by the cries of the wild animals, in which case he should never incur the risk of disturbing the tiger by *unnecessarily* following up the drag.

The next matter to ascertain is the spot at which the tiger drank water after his meal, and the direction he took after drinking. For

this purpose, we then examine the nearest pool of water; and finding by his footprints, in the sand here, that the tiger, after drinking, has again returned in the direction of the kill, all is probably well. But if his footmarks show that he has struck off in the opposite direction, it may then be necessary to follow these tracks in order to make quite certain as to which piece of cover he is heading, and having tracked him thus into a likely bit of cover, to cast round on the further side to see that he has not gone out again, and to act accordingly. But it should also be kept in mind that after drinking, a tiger often goes off in the opposite direction merely to reconnoitre before returning to his kill. In the present case, however, we will assume that the tiger, after having had his drink, has again returned in the direction of the cover in the neighbourhood of his kill. We therefore return quietly to the beaters to hold a consultation with our maps, shikaris, and the most intelligent of the local men.

We light our pipes, if the wind is in a safe direction, and bring out our large scale four-inches-to-the-mile map of the locality; with this on our knees as we sit facing to the north, we first proceed to put some questions to the local men regarding the local geography, in order to convince them that it is within our power to instantly verify their statements regarding the lay of the country and convict them if they are inaccurate; thus from the map we ask them, pointing casually to the west, that if it is not a fact, that in that direction there runs a footpath from such and such a village to such and such a village, and that at such and such point it crosses or passes near, perhaps a water-hole, a nalla or hamlet. A few such questions, regarding a few features of the locality in different directions, will fill these ignorant people with awe and wonder at what they will consider the sportsman's supernatural powers of knowledge, knowing him to be an entire stranger to the place, and thus pave the way to the game of bluff that is to follow in questions put to them regarding the quality of cover in various directions, whether or not the water has dried up in certain nallas, etc., etc., which information is not to be found on the map. In this way much true and valuable information not marked on the map may be successfully extracted by the sportsman, for his informers will now be too much afraid to deviate a hair's-breadth from the truth.

From the information thus extracted, if we were not already previously acquainted with it by personal examination of these jungles, we are now satisfied in regard to the water, cover and the presence of the tiger therein.

The question to be decided now, at this consultation, is the direction in which it is most advisable to drive the tiger, that is to say, the direction in which the tiger of his own accord would most prefer to go, supposing he had a choice in the matter; for, of course, it is always bad policy and also more difficult to drive a tiger in a direction in which for any reason he may be unwilling to go, for this tends to put him out of temper and therefore to make him unmanageable.

On finding himself enclosed in a beat, the tiger realizes that his peregrinations have led him into a trap, whereas he knows that in the jungles from whence he last came, he was undisturbed: so the probability is that he will prefer to be driven in the direction of the latter jungles, rather than in any other jungles where he might get into fresh trouble.

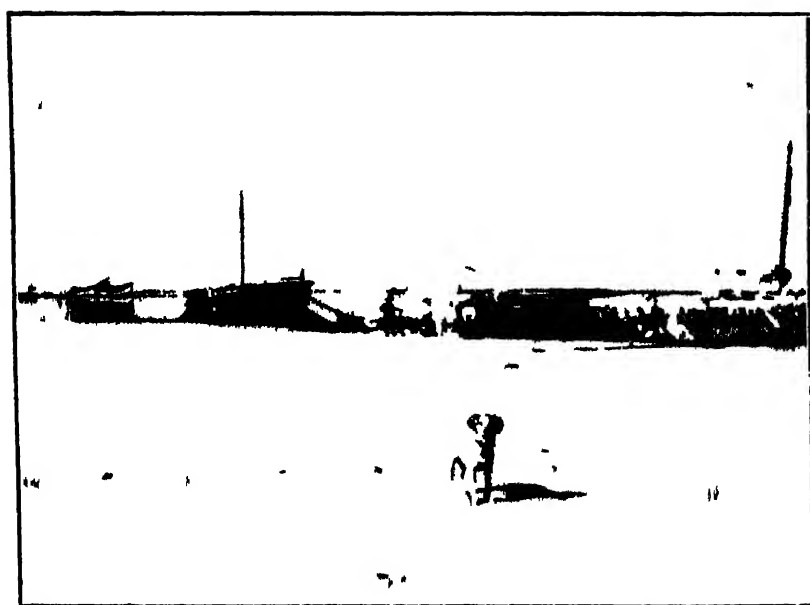
For this purpose, and also to make perfectly sure that by some unlucky chance the tiger has not gone out of the present jungles, we must now do some preliminary tracking, by casting round on either side of the cover in which we believe him at present to be lying up; for it must be remembered that we are staking everything on this *one* bout of the day, and are leaving nothing to chances of having a second, third, and even fourth and fifth beats of the day as we read of sometimes in books, which I consider absurd in view of the confusion and disturbance which such haphazard proceedings cause to the jungles.

For this purpose two parties will now set out, one on either side of the outskirts of the area of the proposed beat to a distance of about a mile and half on either side, to search all the river-beds, footpaths, etc., for the footprints of the tiger which might show that he has lately left the block in question.

The Head Shikari, one orderly and a local man will go thus for about a mile and half round the eastern outskirts, while the sportsman with a few men will similarly skirt and search the western side. Should either party find fresh footprints of the tiger showing that he has left the block, it should immediately halt and send for the beaters, etc., to come up, for the beat now will have to be in an







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entirely new direction to that originally intended. When they have arrived, the beaters should be left as before on the spot to quietly await the return of the sportsman, who will then proceed to track up the tiger so as to make quite certain, in the first instance, as to where he is really lying up in order not to make any false steps necessitating second and third beats, etc.

After tracking him in this manner for a while, perhaps for a mile or two as I have frequently had to do on occasions, the sportsman will probably track him into a likely bit of cover where he may have every reason to believe that he is lying up. In such a case, he should not follow the tracks any further, but should skirt round it and see if the tiger has not gone out on the further side; if he has, the tracking should be continued; but if it has not gone out, the sportsman should place a trustworthy man up a tree to maintain silent watch, while the sportsman returns with all speed in order to ring in the tiger as quickly as possible with the stops and beaters.

We will, however, assume that both search parties have returned to the beaters without having found any fresh tracks of the tiger leaving the jungle, but have, on the other hand, found his tracks leading into the jungle to show that he came from the north, so these two points are now satisfactorily settled.

In the meanwhile the two remaining silent watchers, who have hitherto been keeping guard from the very commencement when the kill was first discovered, have been called in, and their reports also still further convince us that the tiger has not left the cover. It is now proved that the tiger hailed from the north, and having killed, he dragged the carcass towards the north and deposited it two hundred yards to the north of the spot where he killed it; and having drunk at a pool of water quarter of a mile to the south of the scene of the kill, his footprints in the sand show that he again returned to the neighbourhood of his kill; while the reports of the watchers show that he is probably lying asleep within at most six or seven hundred yards of his kill. Therefore, if the jungles lying to the north are suitable, that is to say, if the cover and water in the forests situated to the northwards are good enough to allow a tiger knowing them to be willing to be driven in their direction, we will conclude to beat him towards the north.

This important question being definitely settled, we must proceed with our stops by a circuitous route to the northward to select suitable posts for the guns.

The reader by now is doubtless arguing that by the time all this has been done it will be getting very late in the day. To this I reply that we are taking no chances by making any hasty or false moves; if we take steps to make sure where he is before we beat, and if we find that he has left the cover, we track him till we mark him down, and thereby stake everything on that one beat of the day rather than hopelessly disturb the jungles by a number of haphazard beats. Moreover, if the beat is delayed till the afternoon, the tiger will have somewhat recovered from the lethargy of the heavily-gorged state in which he usually is in the morning and midday, when, if disturbed and forced to travel against his temporary inclination, he is apt to get out of temper and therefore unmanageable; whereas by, say, 3 P.M., by which time he should be completely tied in, the effects of his previous meal will be wearing off and the tiger will be commencing to stretch himself and to move about in anticipation of the approaching night, a second meal and a drink of water—in fact he is now not so stupid and more willing to travel and therefore more “manageable.”

We will now take a bird's-eye view of the whole proceedings. The shikari started from camp at 6-30 A.M., arrived on the scene of the kill at 7-30, returned to camp with the news at 8-30; we left camp at 9 A.M., arrived at the scene of the kill at 10 A.M.; by 10-30 we have returned from inspecting the “drag,” and held a consultation till 11 A.M.; by 12 A.M. both the search parties have returned, and we start to select posts for the guns a mile and half to the northwards; arriving at 12-30 P.M. we spend half an hour in selecting a good spot and by 1 P.M. our shooting-ladders are secured, and we proceed to put up the stops; by 2 P.M. both the wings of the stops have been placed, and the shikaris are sent back to line out the beaters and bring up the beat; by 3 P.M., just at the time when he is beginning to wake up and stretch himself into possession of his full senses, the tiger will be completely surrounded and the beat will commence; and by 4 P.M. he will be shot and tied by his stockings, with a clear hour and a half of daylight left to see us comfortably back to camp.

It must be remembered that in the present description I am endeavouring to provide for every combination of circumstances which come to my mind, which I consider sportsmen are liable to knock up against, so the reader must forgive the unavoidable amount of verbosity which the lack of ability as a writer necessitates in making clear and in driving home important points.

Each and every case will not necessarily require exactly the same procedure; some, according to local reasons, will require less and some more of these precautions. Where, for local reasons, the sportsman finds he is able to dispense with some or all of these precautions and thereby save unnecessary delay, he is strongly advised to do so, for every moment's delay increases the risk of something unlooked-for happening to cause the tiger to move off, while in the winter, unlike the summer, it is usually safe enough to beat at any time of the day, the sooner the better in view of the risk of unexpected accidents, such as the sudden arrival of a pack of wild dogs, who hunt by day and not by night who would at once cause the tiger to desert the jungles.

After this digression, we must again return to the beaters from whence we are to proceed to select the posts for the guns.

The distance of the gun from the beaters is of course regulated by local circumstances; it may only be a few hundred yards or it may be as much as a mile and a half or even two miles. The two sections of beaters, each of thirty men, will now be left in charge of the Chief Orderly and their two section orderlies, to await the arrival of the Head Shikari and his Assistant who, after having posted the sportsman and the stops, will return each under the guidance of a local man, one from the left wing and the other from the right wing of the stops respectively. In this manner the possibility of the beat going off in the wrong direction (as so often happens when the beaters have no one to tell them the exact direction in which the guns have been posted) is obviated.

Having again reminded the beaters of our promise to pay them double wages if the tiger is killed, we now leave them in charge of the three orderlies with strict orders in regard to all talking, making a noise and smoking, while we ourselves proceed silently by a circuitous route to take up our posts, taking with us the two sections

of stops, each of twenty men in charge of an orderly. Besides these two orderlies we will now also have the other two orderlies, D and C, making four orderlies whom we will later place in among the stops in order to stiffen them and keep them up to the mark and to report any cases of disobedience while our fifth or "spare orderly" (who must be a man who can be particularly relied on to keep perfectly quiet and therefore must not be suffering from a cold or cough), we will utilize by placing him on a tall tree in a commanding position in the rear of the guns, from whence he will be able to note as to what has become of the tiger should the latter pass on wounded; and as about eighty per cent. of such tigers that are killed in this manner usually continue to at least forty or sixty yards before they finally fall over either disabled or to expire, a man thus posted behind the gun is of utmost service in being able to tell the sportsman as to whether the tiger has gone on badly or only slightly wounded, or whether it has tumbled over dead and at what point, or whether it has crawled badly wounded under a certain bush and is lying there, and in this manner will save much unnecessary delay and many regrettable accidents.

Besides those men, the Head Shikari and his Assistant will also each have three spare men for emergencies, two of whom later on will be left with the stops if necessary, while the third man, who must be one having a good local knowledge, will guide the shikaris back to the beaters when the stops have been put up.

We will suppose that the duty of helping to put up the left wing of the stops devolves on the Head Shikari, and that of the right wing on the Assistant Shikari. We will now have in each wing 20 men, plus 2 orderlies, plus 2 spare men, making a total of 24 men in each wing to be used as stops, not counting of course the shikaris and their two guides, for they return to the beaters.

On the printed plan of a beat, 20 of these 24 men are shown as "stops" only, and include two orderlies, while the remaining four men are shown as "spare" stops and are marked "x" on the flanks of plan, who are dropped three or four hundred yards apart, as need entails, by each shikari as they proceed respectively from the extreme ends of the ordinary stops and the ends of the lines of the beaters, thus in a manner loosely connecting the stops with the beaters and ringing the tiger completely in before the beat starts.

But I have been anticipating in order to explain to the reader what we are about to do.

We proceed in a curve as silently as possible, keeping a sharp look-out for any fresh footprints that might show that the tiger has left the jungles ; however, we find no such tracks, and at length reach a point where we consider we have gone far enough to ensure that the tiger has been brought into line between ourselves and the beaters, and at the same time are at a safe enough distance from him not to be heard by him while putting up our ladders and stops ; for it must be remembered that in the present case we have no nalla or any other kind of natural lead up or to which to work, the jungle in which we are now working being one level, dense piece of cover with no particular natural features in it to be taken advantage of, which is the kind of cover which appears to puzzle the generality of present-day sportsmen. It is to show how this kind of cover can be successfully worked that the following is given.

Unless very badly pressed for time, the sportsman should never allow himself to be hurried in the selection of the post for the gun. Native shikaris are very fond of rushing sportsmen into accepting positions chosen by themselves by unduly pressing and hurrying the sportsman and thus not giving him time to think and select a position for himself. Half an hour spent on the spot in searching for and finding *the very best* spot in the neighbourhood is not time wasted, and will often save many vain regrets afterwards, such as : " Oh ! if I had only taken the trouble to look more carefully, I would have seen that much better place fifty yards in front (or in the rear) where the tiger stood so quietly, instead of having had that wretched bamboo clump in front of me which caused me to miss him by forcing me to take a right-hand shot, etc., etc."

The chances are that our local guide will lead us straight to a place which he will describe as the very best post for the gun, giving as his reason perhaps that it was this very spot that so and so last, or the year before, obtained a shot at the local tiger. In such cases refuse unconditionally to sit at such a place, for the tiger will certainly remember his former experience of it, and though he will be willing to advance up to within 150 or 200 yards of it, he will refuse to advance any further, and after lying down doggedly until the beaters

have come up to him, will break back over them, perhaps killing some of them in doing so; I have frequently known this to happen. In such cases the sportsman should ascertain at the commencement whether this tiger has been previously beaten in this block, and avoid if possible beating him in the same direction a second time; if this is not possible, then sit some three hundred yards *in advance* of the former post and thus meet the tiger before he reaches what he considers the danger point, and so take him off his guard—(*vide* account of the Majgaon tigress).

Again, in judging accurately the real situation and distances of small fixed objects, the eye needs the aid of an *even* standard of some kind to enable it to judge and measure correctly. In nature, such a standard or basis of measurement is formed by a *level* piece of foreground dotted over with a number of objects, the level ground forming as it were a kind of natural ruler with objects thereon forming the black lines on the ruler. Hold a pencil before your eyes and focus them so as to read the lettering on the pencil; then suddenly look past the pencil at an object forty yards beyond the pencil, and the process of changing the focus of your eyes at once conveys to your brain the idea of distance; but you cannot say, with any approach to accuracy, what that distance is until you cast your look along the level ground that lies between them and calculating unconsciously by the same focussing process the distances between the various objects or marks on this level basis; that is to say, the level ground with the marks on it form the necessary basis for your calculation, without which natural ruler, no such calculation can be made. Thus, calculation of distance is dependent on a series of unconscious calculations of intermediary distances, on a level standard or basis.

Therefore, two things are necessary for these comparisons, namely, a level standard or basis, and objects or marks thereon, exactly as in the case of a ruler.

If either of these are absent, no correct comparisons can be made; and therefore no correct calculation. Thus, on sea on a clear day, the island of Sark, which is seven miles from Guernsey, appears to be scarcely more than two miles away, there being no intermediary objects on the level water to enable the eye to form comparisons.



The same cause and deceptive effects occur, in a more or less degree in looking across a valley or depressions on uneven ground, there being no level basis to form a standard for the eye to work on, in its comparative calculations. Moreover, lights and shades on uneven ground are very uncertain and deceptive, and often make objects appear to be higher or lower, according to circumstances, than they really are; a dark shade on the back of a tiger making it look depressed, while a bright light on it makes it stand out clearly and appear nearer than it really is.

For these reasons tigers are frequently missed when standing on unequal ground, even at close quarters, though some people pool the idea of such being the causes of missing a tiger at thirty yards; but I speak from experience, which has occasionally cost me dear, when I say that such are the causes for missing tigers on uneven ground, such as on the opposite side of a ravine or in a depression.

So it is sound advice never, if possible, to select a tree situated on uneven ground; always choose a place where the tiger will be on the level ground when he appears. Remember that a tiger will usually come along the top of a bank and not below it, so that if you are posted so that a river-bed runs below you, the tiger will generally come along the top of the bank if there is anything like any cover on it, and not in the river-bed as native shikaris are very fond of asserting, unless the cover in the bed, such as *jaman* bushes, is very much better than on top of the bank. Also tigers *invariably* take every possible short-cut, so that in following up the bank of a river, which they are fond of doing, they always strike across every bend in the river; in fact, across every such bend will usually be found an animal-track making a short-cut across the bend; and it is usually along such animal-track that the tiger will come, so wherever possible the post for the gun should be selected on one of these animal-tracks, if the ground is fairly level.

In the present case, however, we will assume that there are no natural leads, such as river-beds, hills or valleys up, or to which to drive the tiger, the area to be beaten being one dead level piece of dense cover.

The verdict of native shikaris and most European sportsmen in India of the present day would probably be that it is impossible to

successfully beat out and shoot a tiger in such cover. But the object of this book is to prove that this is not impossible, but a most easy thing to accomplish, if a little common sense is brought to work and traditional prejudices abolished.

After casting round for some 150 yards and failing to discover any natural leads, we select, as a post for the guns, a level piece of ground fairly sprinkled with trees, say, about 10 yards apart, with the ground under them dotted over with an undergrowth of bushes and clumps of grass, but not so dense as to run into each other and form a dense mass, that is to say to the sportsman, from the height of his ladder, they will appear as small isolated patches of cover with clear spaces around them, though to the tiger on the ground in among them with his foreground completely hidden by the bushes immediately in front and around, it will appear to be an even mass of cover, though the sportsman from his greater height on his ladder, being able to see over and around all the bushes below, will be able to see the tiger quite clearly, and that without being seen himself if he is dressed properly and keeps still, for a tiger otherwise rarely looks upwards. This reason alone is an overwhelming one in favour of always sitting up in a tree or other high place in tiger-shooting, whereas on the ground the sportsman would not be able to see the tiger until he was perhaps within kissing distance, which might possibly be at too close quarters for the likings of some.

Having found a suitable spot, the ladder will now be placed and secured against a tree so that it faces in the direction in which the right wing stops are about to be placed; by this means the left shoulder of the sportsman, seated on the ladder, will then be pointing to the centre of the beat, which will enable him to avoid having to take an awkward right-hand shot, while it is always easy to swing round to the left.

The spot chosen should also, if possible, be such that the cover behind the ladder is sufficiently open to enable the sportsman to get in a second shot up to about sixty yards behind him at an animal that may have passed on wounded.

If there are two guns to be posted, I generally prefer to post them, so that they will command the tiger between them, letting them draw lots for first shot, so that between the two of them the

tiger will stand less chance of getting off scot-free should the first shot miss him, which is so very annoying when so much trouble has been taken to bring him successfully before the gun.

If there are more than two guns, it is then generally better to place them on the best natural runs or leads, placing silent stops between them if necessary.

In the present case we assumed that there are only two guns, namely, the reader who I will denote as R, and myself. So we post ourselves so as to command each other, and R draws the right for the first shot.

Having selected our respective trees, the stops are halted and made to sit down quietly in line some twenty yards to the rear, while the ladders are being firmly secured to the trees; the ladders should invariably be tied firmly to the trees with ropes, for I have frequently known tigers when fired at to rush against the ladder, either accidentally or on purpose, when, if not firmly secured to the tree, the ladder will be knocked over and the sportsman precipitated on top of a wounded tiger.

When the ladder has been secured, a piece of rope about six feet in length should be secured to the side of the ladder on a level with the body of the sportsman when seated on it in his place, with the other end of the rope left loose for the present, so that when the sportsman finally takes his seat, he may pass the rope round in front of his body and secure it to the further side of the ladder, thus preventing the risk of falling off should he at any time in the excitement of a moment forget himself, or accidentally lose his seat or footing.

Our next is the most important and delicate work throughout the whole range of our proceedings, namely, the placing of the sports even though this question has been mostly, if not entirely, ignored by all the sporting books of the present day. Without the proper use of stops, it would be a hopeless task in a dense and level bit of jungle, such as we are dealing with now, without any natural leads of any kind, to successfully bring the tiger before the gun.

Having again reminded the stops of our promise to pay them double wages if the tiger is killed, we leave the right wing stops at

the ladders to await our return, and proceed to post the left wing stops, namely, 20 men including the two orderlies, besides the four 'spare' stops to be posted by the shikari and his guide while on their way back to the beaters.

Whenever possible the sportsman should invariably himself in person post every individual man of the "ordinary" stops of both the right and left wings. Native shikaris can never be trusted to always do this important work properly, even when they have been trained to it by the sportsman in person for as much as ten years, for, whenever they have reason to believe that the tiger will of his own accord follow some natural run up to the gun, they invariably scamp the work of putting up the stops properly and securely, and as tigers on such occasions have a knack of doing the very thing that they are not expected to do, the results usually are disastrous. Time after time I have found some of my oldest native shikaris guilty of this, on occasions when from press of time I have been obliged to entrust them with the task of putting up one wing of the stops while I myself put up the other.

The duties of each individual stop varies according to his individual position in the line, so that the duties of each man must be explained to him individually, and above all *out of the hearing* of the other men, for if the remainder hear any instructions to one of their number, they promptly jump to the conclusion that the same instructions will in turn be given to them also, and thereupon make a point of committing these instructions on the first hearing so firmly to mind, that when their own turn comes, they will not take the trouble to listen to what is being said to them under the impression that they have already heard their instructions on overhearing those given to the previous man; when at length it begins to dawn on them that there is a mistake somewhere, they will lose their heads and nerves completely, and in their general confusion of mind will cling doggedly to the only idea left them, namely, their first idea, no matter what may now be said to them, so that now nothing but force will make the recalcitrant relinquish them and listen afresh and to repeat correctly the new instructions. To prevent these difficulties, the sportsman and his shikari must proceed about twenty-five yards ahead of the stops, while the stops should be brought up behind in

double file, in charge of the two orderlies, who should carefully maintain the distance between themselves and the sportsman, by halting the instant the latter halts, and proceeding again only when the latter proceeds.

In this manner the sportsman must proceed, in a curve, until he arrives at a tree where he considers a stop should be placed, and therefore halts, the stops and orderlies behind halting correspondingly. He then beckons to the orderlies, who thereupon send forward one stop alone to the sportsman, who will then explain to him in an undertone all the details of what he is required to do, and when he has finished the instructions, the shikari should again repeat to him word for word all the orders after which the stop himself must be made to repeat correctly all the instructions he has received.

After seeing him up his tree, the sportsman will continue to the next post, where the performance will be repeated, each man's instructions being given in an undertone out of the hearing of the remainder, repeated in the same manner by the native shikari who naturally speaks the language better than an European, and finally repeated correctly, also in an undertone, by the stop.

In view of the thickness of the cover, the first five stops will be placed only ten yards apart in order to prevent the tiger, owing to the silence of these men and the density of the cover, from slipping away between them unseen. The nearest man to the gun will be at a distance of 30 yards from the gun, provided the latter is able to command the view as far as that.

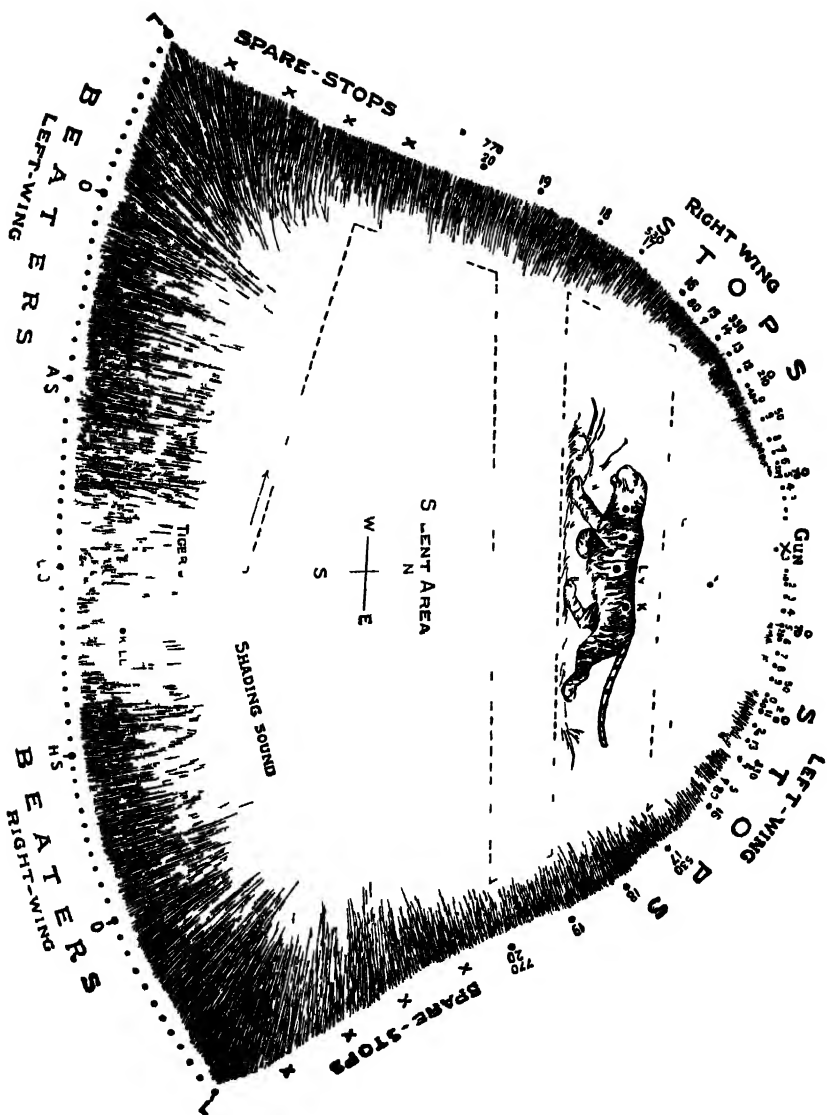
The duties of the stops have already been partly explained; but it will be as well, in view of its great importance, to go over the whole ground again here in its proper place. As before stated, the amount of noise made by individual stops must necessarily decrease as the position of the stop approaches the gun, while, where there is less noise on the part of the stops, the distance here between these stops must be less in order to prevent the tiger silently sneaking away unseen between them. Where the noise made by the stops is greater, the distance between them can be greater, for the increased noise in this direction will be heard by the tiger at a greater distance who will in consequence be prevented from heading in their direction at all.

In order to explain the general principle, we will assume fixed distances, and say that the first five stops are placed ten yards apart, the next five twenty yards apart, the next five forty yards apart, and the last five (of these twenty stops) eighty yards apart; thus the last or 20th "ordinary" stop being at a distance of 770 yards from the gun.

We have assumed these fixed distances for the sake of convenience in explaining a general principle; but when it comes to the real thing in the jungles, the actual distance between the stops and the instructions given to individuals will be governed to a certain extent by local circumstances, though adhering throughout in the main to the general principle, namely, that the stops will always be nearer together where there is less noise than where the noise is greater.

Under the circumstances assumed in the present case, namely, the beating of a portion chopped out as it were from an extensive dead level mass of very dense cover—*on the commencement of the beat* the various stops will act as follows:—

- (a) Stops Nos. 1 to 5 inclusive, that is to say, up to a distance of 70 yards from the gun should continue to remain perfectly silent (no matter what the other stops may be doing, this having been explained to them individually), until the time when they see the tiger heading towards them, when only they will give a low cough just loud enough to attract the attention of the tiger, but not so loud as to unduly startle or frighten him.
- (b) Stops Nos. 6 to 9 inclusive, that is to say, those posted at a distance of 90 to 150 yards of the gun, will commence to tap a branch very gently with the handle of their axe, but making a very slight noise thereby, not more than made by a pencil gently tapped on a table, and only sufficient to be heard at a distance of some thirty yards, but not more. Should the tiger continue to head in their direction regardless of their tapping, they must then use their voices to turn him, first quietly, then louder if necessary; if the tiger is still obstinate, they must drop a cloth to the ground, and also throw stones (which every stop should be instructed to take up with him in his waist-cloth to be used in case of such an emergency) and shout loudly







at him. These latter remarks—in cases of obstinacy only on the part of the tiger—apply to *all* the stops, from Nos. 1 to 20 irrespective of their position, so I will not again refer to them.

- (c) Stops Nos. 10 and 11, namely, those posted at a distance of 170 to 210 yards of the gun, will also tap, but louder than Nos. 6 to 9.
- (d) Stops Nos. 12, 13 and 14, namely, those at a distance of 250 to 330 yards from the gun, will tap loudly and will also keep up a continuous conversation among each other.
- (e) Stops Nos. 15, 16 and 17, namely, those at a distance of 370 to 530 yards from the gun, will keep up a continuous though modified shouting.
- (f) Stops Nos. 18, 19 and 20, namely, those at a distance of 600 to 700 yards from the gun, will keep up a continuous and loud shouting.

*N.B*—No stop will utter a sound until the beat commences.

From the foregoing it will now be seen how the instructions, among the different sections of the stops vary; and hence how necessary it is for the sportsman to be careful to see that one section does not get a mixed idea of their instructions by accidentally overhearing the different instructions given to another section of their neighbours. So when giving a man his instructions, it must be done out of the hearing of the others; and he must be made to understand that he must not allow his own actions to be influenced by the actions of his neighbours because their instructions are different from his.

Each stop should be posted by the sportsman in person, on a branch of a tree about 14 feet from the ground. He must explain to him the direction from which the beat will come—in this instance from the south—and must see him *comfortably* seated, facing the south and must warn him particularly not to change his branch for a higher or lower one, or change his tree altogether for a more comfortable one, or sit with his back to the beat in order to be more comfortably seated. He should be told that two *sepahis* (orderlies) are also posted among the stops of each wing to patrol and watch them, who will take the wad number of any stop that disobeys any instructions or allows the tiger to break through the line.

Sometimes a timid stop, when placed on a tall tree, will, when left alone, climb high up and hide himself among the topmost branches, from whence it would be very difficult, if not quite impossible, for him to see the approach of a tiger below. Another more thick-witted, will conclude that it is more comfortable to sit on the ground at the foot of his tree, so that when the tiger suddenly appears before him he will become so frozen with fear that he will be unable to make the sound which is necessary to turn the tiger, who will in consequence escape past him.

The sportsman has to guard against such eccentricities, and after making each stop repeat correctly his individual instruction, he should also be made to repeat a formula something as follows:—

- “1. I must not get down this tree and get up another one, or change this branch for a higher or lower one.
- “2. I must not sit with my back to the beat.
- “3. I will receive double wages if the tiger is killed, but not if the *sepahi* reports any failure of duty on my part.”

The two wing orderlies should be placed at Nos. 5 and 11 respectively in each wing, for this is perhaps the most delicate portion of the line, where the silence commences to be broken by sound, so that the orderlies here can check those who are too noisy and admonish those who are not acting up to their instructions. They should patrol the line of stops until the time when they hear the opening shouts of the beaters, when they should each quietly climb up into their respective trees, and thereafter, besides performing their own parts as stops, should keep a sharp look-out on the stops to their right and left, and, if necessary, quietly admonish any who may be failing to act up to their instructions.

While putting up the stops, as before stated, the sportsman should proceed in a *wide* curve, so as to allow the tiger plenty of room between the two lines of stops in which to roam about at will, until he is finally driven forward to the gun by the advancing mass of beaters. It is usually fatal to have the two lines of stops, one on either side of the gun, so close together as to form a narrow V, with the gun at the apex.

We therefore now take care to proceed in a wide curve, and as we proceed, we may occasionally come across an extra thick piece of

cover or lead, through which the tiger may later on make determined efforts to pass. Here we may have to place two, and even more, men together in the same tree, so that their numbers will give them courage to resist the efforts of the tiger, for in such places a tiger will often charge the position of the stops repeatedly with loud roars in his endeavours to break through, which is apt to scare a single man, so that nothing short of determined mobbing and stone-throwing by a number of men together guarding such a passage (generally a narrow ravine, a nalla or a narrow lead of particularly dense jungle, where for some adverse reason it was unadvisable to post the guns) will make the tiger relinquish his efforts in this direction. A white cloth or a piece of newspaper hung on a bush a few yards in front of the stops in such a place will often help them considerably in turning an obstinate tiger. When sufficient men are not obtainable, in the place of stops, may be used a length of rope, hung at intervals with strips of white cloth, with here and there a rattle or a wooden bell; these ropes can be ranged out in the place of stops for hundreds of yards, one or two men at intervals being sufficient to jerk the ropes and so cause the rattles or bells to make the necessary noise. But I have never found this to replace human stops satisfactorily, being an endless nuisance in the jungles, always becoming linked up and entangled in an exasperating manner and refusing to work at the most critical moment.

However, an ample supply of newspaper should always be taken, for it is not only very handy for ordinary purposes in the jungles, but also comes in very useful at a pinch in beating, when placed on a piece of stick stuck into the ground or on a bush at a tight corner such as described above.

But the use of a piece of paper in this manner among the "silent" stops should be resorted to with the very greatest caution, for, there being no noise in that direction to warn the tiger, he will not be aware of there being anything unusual present until he suddenly comes up against it, which is apt to scare him to such an extent that in his panic he may charge it and knock it over, and then becoming quite unmanageable in his fright, he will charge headlong through the stops regardless of all they might do to try and stop him. I therefore prefer to use an extra man, if such is necessary, within

about a hundred yards of the gun, rather than place a white object on the ground to be suddenly walked on to unawares by the tiger.

For this reason, when posting the stops, it is advisable also to warn them not on any account to leave any of their clothes lying about on the ground, or hung on a neighbouring bush, as they are fond of doing should their clothes have happened to become wet from any cause, such as by perspiration, dew, etc. I once lost a tiger in this manner, for the second stop from me had elected to spread, unnoticed by me, his cloth on a bush below him to dry as he afterwards explained, with the result that the tiger, who was quietly on his way to me, suddenly caught sight of it on rounding a bush, and away he dashed roaring through the opposite line of stops, paying not the slightest attention, in his panic, to their frantic endeavours to stop him. Another tiger I lost in a similar way, but on this occasion owing to disobedience on the part of one of the silent stops; in order to be more comfortable on his branch, he faced round on it with his back to the beaters, so that he failed to detect the arrival of the quietly stealing tiger until the latter was almost under his tree, and then, in his anxiety to turn the tiger in time, he pitched his axe at it and yelled like a fiend, with the result that the tiger broke headlong through the stops.

I have detailed these two cases in order to emphasize the necessity for care in such matters.

When all the 20 stops have been carefully posted in this manner by the sportsman himself, a keen look-out having also been maintained for the fresh footprints of the tiger should he by any chance have left the jungle in this direction, on posting the 20th or last of the ordinary stops, the sportsman should go no further himself. He is now 770 yards from his ladder, and will therefore be about a mile from the right extremity of the line of beaters when the latter have been finally extended. He will now direct the Head Shikari and his guide to return to the beaters, proceeding in a curve and taking with them the four "spare stops," with orders to similarly post these men as they proceed at intervals of about four hundred yards apart, keeping a sharp look-out on their way for the fresh tracks of the tiger. These four men, on the commencement of the beat, will shout their

loudest and so prevent the tiger, by this greater amount of noise from heading in their direction at all. They are marked on the plan as X.

All the stops of course have orders to sit perfectly silent, *till* the beat commences (unless they see the tiger trying to break through their line before); but on the commencement of the beat, each and every stop will act according to his individual instructions.

Having posted up all the ordinary stops of the left wing, and sent off the Head Shikari and his party to post the "spare stops" and to line out the beaters, the sportsman should at once hasten back to his ladder, checking and correcting if necessary, on his way back, the positions of the stops whom he has just put up, and giving them a few words of encouragement, or censure as the case may be, as he goes along. Hereafter the two wing orderlies patrolling will be responsible that the stops maintain their correct positions and perform their duties properly.

On returning to his ladder where the remaining men have been quietly awaiting him, the sportsman will at once proceed to post the right wing stops, in an exactly similar manner to that in which the left wing has just been placed, giving the same instructions to the Assistant Shikari and his guide with reference to the posting of their four "spare stops" while on their way back to line out and bring up the beaters. Thus a shikari and a local guide return to the beaters from each wing of the stops, and therefore know exactly how the stops are placed and where the gun is posted, so that there is now no possibility of the beat going off in the wrong direction, as so often happens in haphazard methods of beating.

In the right wing stops also, exactly the same as in the left wing, there will be two orderlies at Nos. 5 and 11, who will be patrolling the stops until the beat commences.

It is now 2 P.M., and it will be an hour before we will hear the opening shouts of the beaters, so we have plenty of time in which to select a suitable post behind our ladders on which to place later our look-out man, our "spare orderly" having selected which, we will bring him back with us to help in the task of unpacking our tiffin-basket, for this man is a personal attendant and handy at all work of this description. Having indulged our inner-man, we may then, if the wind is steady and blowing from the tiger to us, even indulge

in the luxury of a smoke, for all traces of the smoke will have been blown away long before the tiger appears on the scene.

An European can always spot the smell of a *hooka* even when smoked by the natives in the open, and a tiger is not a whit behind hand in this matter, though I have mentioned that in my opinion he is a duffer in this respect as compared with other wild animals; if human beings who are used to it can at once detect the smell of tobacco in fresh air, how much sooner will a tiger, who is not accustomed to it, detect it. I therefore can by no means agree with Mr. Saunderson when he says that there is no fear of detection, or words to that effect, in smoking at night when sitting up for tigers. Sportsmen should be very careful in noting the direction and character of the wind when they indulge in the use of tobacco in the jungles.

Having comfortably disposed of our tiffin and our smoke, our next care is to see that our tiffin-basket, etc., is deposited well out of sight, and in the shade, behind us, particular care being taken to see that these are so placed that the rays of the sun will not work round on to them at any time as the sun moves round in the heavens, or we may find, as once happened in my experience, that at a critical moment just when we are expecting the tiger to put in his appearance, that the soda water bottles in the tiffin-basket behind us are bursting one after another from the effects of the sun, and thus acting very effectively as stops immediately in our rear!

Having seen to this matter, we proceed to take our seats on our respective ladders, our orderly seeing us comfortably seated and secured by the rope, handing up our *empty* guns or rifles, and breaking for us any twigs or grass that may unnecessarily obstruct our range of view. When I say "unnecessarily obstruct," I refer to only such obstructions that can be readily removed by hand without making any glaring alterations in the foreground, for all wild animals are very quick in detecting such alterations and at once change their course accordingly. There must be no breaking or cutting whatever which entails any noise, a hand-saw being carried for the purpose of silently removing an obstruction that it is absolutely necessary to remove.

After this the orderly will proceed to his look-out tree 200 yards in our rear; by climbing up as high as possible, the tree being a very tall one in more or less open surroundings, he will be able to

command a view to a distance of perhaps some four hundred yards on all sides of him, he will be able to call out to us and let us know what has become of the tiger should the latter pass on wounded. But he must be a man who knows his work thoroughly and, above all, one who can be trusted to sit perfectly quiet without shifting about or making any other kind of noise, for any such noise behind us might turn back the advancing tiger.

With reference to fire-arms, I have been a poor man all my life, and therefore could never indulge in an expensive or extensive battery. Nevertheless it may be conceded that, during forty years, I have had considerable opportunities for observing the effects of various kinds of fire arms in tiger-shooting, if not actually in my own hands, in the hands of those who have been with me. However, I have gone into this question in a separate chapter, so I will now content myself in passing with the mention that I have done the majority of my tiger-shooting with an ordinary twelve-bore gun, and a twelve-bore rifle, using spherical soft-lead bullets, with 3½ drams and 6 drams of black powder respectively. With this old gun alone by E. M. Reilly and Co., I have shot over 200 tigers, a large number of them on foot, without meeting with a single accident with it in my hands (except two near shaves), and it was not till I used a .450 express rifle to stop a charge that I got into trouble by being mauled; so I have good reason to be satisfied with my smooth-bore gun with which I am accustomed to shoot birds on the wing, so that it comes up to my shoulder naturally and requires no particular taking of "aim" as in the case of a rifle. Moreover, one rarely cares to risk a shot at a tiger much over 60 yards in thick cover or should not do so; while at that distance I would undertake to hit a crown-piece almost every time with bullets from my old smooth-bore.

As I will not admit a companion in tiger-shooting who is armed with a bore, whether gun or rifle, the diameter of which is less than half an inch, in the present case, we will assume that I am using my smooth-bore gun, while R, my companion, is armed with a .577 express rifle.

On no account should any one be seated with the sportsman during a beat, for in such circumstances a native is the most incorrigible being under the sun, and is sure to betray the sportsman to the advancing tiger, either by speaking to or nudging the sportsman in

order to inform him of the approach of the tiger, the sportsman probably already having been fully aware of the presence of the tiger, perhaps for the last twenty minutes. A tiger rarely ever looks up, so if the sportsman is suitably dressed, he will rarely be discovered by the tiger, unless he *moves*. The excuse that a man is necessary to hold and hand a second gun is a poor one, for the second barrel is about all the sportsman will be able to get in before the stricken tiger is out of sight behind him; or, if he has time to hand over his empty rifle and take over a spare one in time to use it on the tiger, it will only be because the tiger is so disabled by the first two barrels that he is unable to get away, in which case the first rifle could have been reloaded in time for the same purpose.

Therefore, never attempt to keep a second rifle with you on the ladder; for in the excitement of the moment the empty rifle is almost sure to be dropped and come to grief, or in hurriedly grabbing the loaded rifle, that also may be dropped and so cause what may be a serious accident.

On the other hand, the sportsman might with advantage keep a loaded revolver, or a Mauser Pistol, tucked in his belt, for emergencies, provided it has efficient "safety" such as the latter possesses.

We have now nothing left to do but to await patiently on our ladders the advance of the beaters.

In order to understand the arrangements in connection with the beaters, it will be necessary to follow the movements of the shikaris whom we despatched, after we put up the stops.

When the Head Shikari, proceeding from the extremity of the left wing stops, having satisfactorily posted as he proceeds the four "spare stops" on the way, on reaching the beaters, he will at once extend to the right (to the east on the plan) the thirty men of No. 1 section of the beaters, placing the men at first only 45 yards apart, but increasing the distance between them if necessary towards the outward extremity of the line, in order to make this line *cleft in as far as possible with the last or nearest of the "spare stops."*

The Chief Orderly should be on the left flank of the No. 1 section which forms the right wing of the beaters. The Head Shikari and one of the two remaining orderlies should post themselves in the



line so that they will have ten men on either side of them (we are at present dealing with only the right wing of the beaters ; the left wing will be dealt with similarly, when the Assistant Shikari returns), and will be responsible for their proper formation and advance ; while the local guide, who has hitherto accompanied the Head Shikari, should be placed at the extreme end of the line on the outward flank nearest the stops, for he has seen where the latter have been posted and will be able to guide the outward flank of the line so as to cleft in correctly with the outlying stops.

In this manner the right half or right wing of the beaters will be complete ; in which—commencing from the centre (left to right) of the line—there will be the Chief Orderly, ten men, one orderly, ten men, Head Shikari, ten men, and lastly the local guide on the right flank, making a total of thirty men, besides three supervisors in the orderly, Head Shikari and the local guide, not counting the Chief Orderly in the centre, for he forms the centre pivot for both the wings of the beater on either side of him.

When the right wing has been thus arranged, they will remain quietly seated, the orderlies patrolling the line in the meanwhile to keep order, until the Assistant Shikari arrives on the left after having put up the right wing stops.

As soon as he reaches the beaters, the Assistant Shikari will at once line out to the left, the remaining thirty men of the beaters, namely, No. 2 section, in a similar manner to that in which the right wing has been aligned ; placing himself on the left of the Chief Orderly but with ten men between, the remaining orderly being to his left again at a distance also of ten men, while his local guide will in like manner be on the extreme left of the line. Thus the sportsman's five private men will be within the line, with ten beaters on either side of each of them, so that each man will be able to supervise the five beaters nearest to him on either side, *i.e.*, 50 men, the remaining five men on the left and right extremities of the line respectively, where the work is not so delicate, can be looked after and guided by local guides posted there for the purpose.

When the line is finally ready, it should not advance at once, but should stand still where they are and shout all together for some five minutes before advancing—this in order to give the tiger, should

he happen to be lying asleep close by, time to wake up and to collect his wits sufficiently to determine correctly the direction in which silence lies and to make off thither accordingly, instead of waking up suddenly to find the men on top of him, when he would be very apt in his panic to break back over and kill some of the beaters.

However, there is little danger of this happening now, for it is now 3 P.M., by which time the tiger has recovered from the lethargy in which he was earlier in the day, so the moment the beaters commence shouting, he jumps to his feet, in full possession of all his wits, and listens attentively for perhaps a whole minute without moving in order to note how the land lies from the directions from whence the various sounds he hears are coming.

The first shout among the beaters is given in this case by the Assistant Shikari, as soon as he has completed the alignment of the left half of the line of beaters. His shout is taken up all along the line of beaters and by the "spare stops" adjacent to them; of the other or ordinary stops further up the lines on either side, on hearing the opening shouts of the beaters each and every man at once commences to act according to his individual instructions.

Thus, in taking stock of his situation, the tiger finds that there is a great deal of shouting to the south of him, and on either flank, to the east and west; while to the northwards all is silent. However, the sounds that he hears on three sides of him are a long way off, so there is no immediate danger, for he has plenty of time and, what is more, plenty of space, in which to make his plans for his retreat; so not being pressed in any way, he does not get flurried or frightened, but moves off quietly and slowly towards the north, stopping every now and again to take stock of his situation and to change his course whenever he finds himself to be heading in the direction of a fresh series of sounds which had been unnoticed by him before. He first heads to the west, but shortly finds that in this direction there is a line of sound barring his way; so he changes his course to the north and skirts along the line in the hopes of finding a silent break in the line, but, as the sound still continues, he gives up his intention of breaking out to the west and strikes straight across to the east. After proceeding some way in this direction without interruption, he becomes conscious that to the east also there is a line of sound

which bars his way ; so he again changes his direction to the north and skirts along this new line of sound ; but finding no outlet here either, he again strikes off to the west, but with the same results as before.

In this manner the tiger is gradually worked up to the silent stops, without getting flurried, for he has plenty of time and plenty of space in which to roam about at will. On appearing before one of the silent stops, he suddenly hears a low cough, which immediately brings him to a halt, and causes him to draw back, perhaps with a growl of displeasure, to retreat again for a few hundred yards, where he will lie down under a bush to try and think the matter out. Here he may lie for half an hour, until the advancing beaters again cause him to get up and go forward. He may again try one of the silent-stops on the opposite side, or he may go straight forward to the gun at a slow unwilling walk, halting every ten or fifteen yards to listen for some indication of these silent and unknown enemies of whose presence somewhere he is vaguely and indefinitely aware ; it is during one of those halts that he finally meets his fate.

Contrast the results of this method of handling the tiger, with the results of methods usually recommended in sporting books on this subject. During the course of twenty or more years of a tiger's life, he is tolerably certain to have been fired at some time or another, by pot-hunting native shikaris if by no one else ; he is therefore usually well aware of the meaning of a gunshot. So just imagine how this tiger would behave, if we allowed the beaters to use firearms, drums, "rumtolas, fifes and twenty rattles—all combining to make such a pandemonium of sound," or a "loud and piercing discord" that the "decent-minded tiger" would "charge at full speed like a flash of lightning" through all obstacles, whether beaters or stops, and make good his escape ; or, which is more than likely, he would be too afraid to move at all from sheer terror, so that he will "squat" or sit tight under some bush until the beaters are on and around him, when he will charge and kill some of them, and escape. In one book I see it stated that beaters should not advance in a thin line, but in "groups" who should make all the above fiendish noise for "self-protection" ; to which I reply that there is no danger to the beaters (except in the case of a tigress with cubs or a wounded tiger, who

should never be beaten) unless and until the tiger has been so terrified that he charges in a panic, or "squats," as they often do when they are afraid to move at all on account of the terrific din.

To return to our beat. After standing still for five minutes and shouting, in order to allow the tiger to get on foot and choose his own line of retreat, the beaters will advance steadily and carefully, each man throwing stones before him and leaving no cover undisturbed on the way, which is liable to hold the tiger, in all of which and other of their duties they should have been individually coached by the section orderlies while the stops were being posted.

The three orderlies and the two shikaris with the beaters should each be provided with shrill whistles, with which they will from time to time keep each other informed as to the relative positions of their part of the line, in order to preserve a correct alignment.

As the advancing line of beaters comes level with each of the stops, that stop should descend from his tree and join in with the beaters, and as the number of stops thus added increases, the beaters should close in a bit towards the centre; so that by the time the line of beaters has advanced two-thirds of the distance towards the guns, at which time the tiger is generally on the point of appearing before the gun, there is such a dense mass of advancing human beings behind him, that it would be a bold tiger, not otherwise unduly provoked or frightened, to break back on them.

Perhaps enough has now been said to give the reader a fairly detailed idea as to how the beat is arranged and brought up. We will therefore revert to our anticipations on our ladders.

At about 3 p.m. we hear the opening shouts of the beaters, which is at once taken up in a similar manner by the stops on the extreme right and left, while the nearer stops next to them commence tapping sharply, the latter noise dying down gradually until it dies altogether into silence when within about a hundred yards of our ladders. All this is satisfactory, and all we now have to do is to await immovably on our ladders the appearance of the tiger, who might appear almost immediately, or might not put in an appearance (especially if he has happened to have caught sight of the sportsman on his ladder) until the very end of the beat when the beaters are almost treading on his tail within twenty yards of our ladders, as

sometimes happens ; so never be in a hurry to get down from your ladder until the beaters have actually *passed by* the ladder, for the manner in which a tiger will appear is also influenced by the temperament of the beast and his former experiences in this line.

As to the movements of the tiger, however, we will have ample warning ; for all the animals and birds of the jungles are his sworn enemies, who for mutual warning make it a point of honour to betray his presence by uttering loud cries of hatred the moment they catch sight of him, and keep it up as long as he is within their view. By these means we can usually follow almost all the movements of the tiger within the area of the beat, though we cannot see him.

First a doe-samber sees him and sends her bell-like note echoing across the forests ; the cry is taken up by the sharper note of the cheetle, and added to by the hoarse barking cry of an irate old langoor monkey perched up on the top of a large silk-cotton or *scrub* tree, where he is using language apparently sufficient to make the tiger's hair stand on end. Further on there is suddenly a great commotion among a family of peafowl, for several of them suddenly rise into the air with a great clatter and sail away uttering their loud and continuous cries of alarm though some others of their party, who have been taken less unawares, content themselves by fluttering up into the branches of the neighbouring trees and from thence express their indignation in loud and disjointed notes.

After this all is perhaps quiet for a time, when suddenly a pair of magpies discover the presence of the villain and thereupon they give him a warm ten minutes, circling round and round him and mobbing him with their shrill *char ! char ! char !* which can be heard distinctly at least a quarter of a mile away. However, in keeping with a peculiar trait of wild animals and birds in this matter, the magpies soon forget all about him the moment the tiger has proceeded out of their sight when they again resume their soft and sweet bell-like note so different to their harsh cries of alarm.

All is now quiet for perhaps half an hour, when suddenly our attention is called by a great increase of energy on the part of No. 10 stop on our right who has suddenly commenced to tap with increased violence and also to cough, which is then taken up soon afterwards by stops Nos. 9, 8 and 7 on the same side. This, however,

dies down shortly, thereby showing that these men have seen the tiger and have successfully turned him.

A period of silence again follows, until suddenly we hear a low cough on our left, given by No. 6 stop, followed by silence, and we know that he has seen the tiger and has also succeeded in turning him. Shortly after this we notice that a squirrel on a tree, about two hundred yards to our right front is greatly agitated, for he suddenly commences his continuous chirruping, which he usually only does when he sees something that frightens him, so we are probably correct in concluding that he too has seen the tiger.

Our nerves are now strung to a high pitch, so that with every rustle among the leaves in our foreground, we expect the appearance of the royal beast which we are awaiting. For an hour past our nerves have been kept on the jump by the spasmodic rustlings from time to time in our right front, which exactly resemble the noise made by a tiger as he slouches through dried leaves; so for a whole hour we have been straining our eyes and ears in that direction; at last we hear just one *luck!* and we lean back with a sigh of disgust, for the noise is being made only by a colony of these confounded rat-birds, commonly known as "the seven brothers," who are hopping about under the bushes and turning over the dead leaves sharply with their bills in search of insects; how many thousands of times these wretched birds have made a fool of me in this manner? I owe them many a grudge.

In the meanwhile the beat has advanced to almost within six hundred yards of our position, but no tiger has put in an appearance yet; he is probably lying down quietly under some bush, a couple of hundred yards in front of us, to await events. Suddenly the rat-birds, who have hitherto been scattered, collect together in a bunch as if by common consent, about eighty yards to our left front, and commence a most appalling mobbing of some object, with all the chattering swear-words at their command. At the same time No. 3 stop to our right gives a low cough. There is no more noise on the part of the stops, but the colony of rat-birds do not cease the din of their combined chatter, each one apparently trying to shriek louder than his companion; they shift their position on the bushes slightly to our direct front, and five minutes later a magnificent old tiger appears and

commences to advance quietly in our direction, but stopping every few yards to take a steady look over his shoulder and listen to the beaters coming along behind him, but he is not a bit flurried and is taking things very easily. He halts for a moment some fifteen yards in front of me, and for a time his gaze is fixed full on my face; but as my eyes are half closed and I do not move a muscle, he takes me for a portion of the tree and quietly resumes his leisurely slouch in the direction of R, who has drawn the right for first shot—for which reason I refrain from shooting. When within 20 yards of R, the tiger again leisurely halts to listen over his shoulder to the oncoming beaters. R has been watching the advance of the tiger for the last hundred yards, and has in the meanwhile brought his rifle *gradually* to his shoulder without any jerky movement, and is waiting in this position for this final opportune halt of the tiger in front of him; or it may be that at the last moment the tiger spots some slight movement on the part of R, but he is now too late to bound away in time to avoid the bullet which strikes him in the shoulder and rolls him over. But the tiger recovers his legs (R should have aimed at the hollow in the neck of the tiger, the hollow above the collar-bone in a human being, where the neck springs from the shoulder) and dashes past R with a roar, receiving the contents of the second barrel as he goes: the last thing that R now notices about the tiger being a peculiar “stiffened flourish” of the tiger’s tail, which is almost invariably a sign that all is over with that tiger.

Seeing that R was morally safe to account for his tiger successfully I have refrained from helping him, so as not to make *too much unnecessary noise* for the behaviour of the two magpies, whom I can now see about two hundred yards in the front of me, make me strongly suspect that there was also another tiger in this beat.

I see R preparing to get down from his tree, thinking that all is now over, so I quietly warn him to keep his seat and be prepared; after which I give three blasts on my bugle, which is the signal to the beaters that all is safe for them to continue the advance, for they all have had strict orders that the moment they hear the sportsmen fire a shot, every man must immediately climb into a tree, from which no man will on any account descend or advance again until the signal to do so is given on the bugle.

This precaution is essential, in case a tiger is wounded and goes back into the beat.

The beat now recommences, and comes closer and closer, until the beaters are almost within twenty yards of our ladders; but nothing more turns up.

It commences to unload and prepares to come down, when suddenly there is a loud roar, and a large tigress, which, having heard the previous shots, has been squatting unseen in a bush in front of me, springs out and comes dashing under my tree. I aim well forward at her to allow for her pace, and fire; and by good fortune the bullet strikes her in the nape of her neck and breaks her vertebra killing her instantly, though her impetus carries her dead body on in a series of cart-wheels until it finally fetches up with a thud against the trunk of a tree (*vide* chapter entitled "A Case of Nerves"), having struck my ladder heavily on the way, so that had the ladder not been securely tied to the tree, I would have had a nasty accident. However, from our position on our ladders we cannot be certain where the bullet has struck, so to make matters quite safe I put another bullet into the tigress, picking my shot; but in the excitement of doing so, my foot slips, and I would have fallen and perhaps broken my own neck, but for the rope tied round me.

Now a few words in regard to "spoiling the skin" with bullet holes. When the skin is removed, take some of the sinews out of the fore-arm of the tiger and with this sew up those bullet-holes which you do not wish to be seen on the skin, taking particular care to start with a firm knot and ending with a knot equally secure; then turn the skin over and carefully pick out with a needle all the hairs that may have been sewn up with the stitching, and then brush the hair over the part with a brush, and there will probably not be the slightest trace on the hair surface to betray that there was ever a hole in that part of the skin; while also the stitching, thus made will last as long as the skin will last. Now where is the necessity for the outcry of "Oh! don't spoil the skin!" Make twenty bullet-holes in it if you like and then treat in the manner described, and the skin will be permanently as good as if it had never had a hole in it at all. Yet how many fatal accidents have occurred, solely owing to the cry "Oh! don't spoil the skin." I have on several occasions known tigers



through a jar on their spine to lie as if they were stone dead for a considerable time, in one case for over an hour, and then suddenly recover their senses, to either run amok among the men that surround them or, in the panic which their sudden resurrection has caused, to make good their escape. A bird in hand is worth many in the bush: so always make sure of a tiger which you may have knocked over by putting another bullet into him, picking your shot if you can, with this provision, that if the beat is not yet over, rest content with one "piked" shot after the first shot, "placing" your second shot, if you are able, either in the neck or heart; the blood welling up at the spot will show whether or not you hit where you wished; for unnecessary shooting before the beat is completely over may spoil all your chances of a second tiger, should there be another in the beat, as in the present case.

My tigress, however, is now *hors de combat*, for we can see the blood welling up both on her neck and over her heart, so the beaters, who on the first roar of the tigress had whipped up the surrounding trees, now come down and help us down with our arms from our ladders. Remember always to unload all your weapons before sending them either up or down a ladder, but do not forget to reload them when up.

Our immediate task now is to look for the first tiger fired at. On enquiry, the look-out orderly in the rear shouts out that he saw the first tiger fall headlong into a bush, from which it did not again appear, so, if it was still alive, it must be still crouching in the same bush.

We are now dealing with a wounded tiger, so we must be very careful. The bush is first located, and then "ringed" by men up trees on all sides of it. The ring is then gradually and cautiously narrowed, the sportsmen standing by on the ground to guard them in case of a rush on the part of the tiger, as they climb from one tree to the other, their object being to try and spot the exact position of the tiger from their vantage posts on the surrounding trees.

At length one of the men cries out that he is able to see the tiger and describes his position to the others, who then have little difficulty in also locating him, and soon the tiger is being pelted with a hail of stones from all sides, which the men have taken up with them for the purpose. A number of large stones are seen to strike

the tiger as he lies on the ground and bound off without a move on the part of the beast. He is probably quite dead.

The men in the trees say that the head of the tiger as he lies on the ground points to the north, we therefore now approach him from the south, the tail end. Never approach even an apparently dead tiger with his head towards you, in case he should take it into his head to suddenly come to life and nab you.

At last we obtain a clear view of the beast, and give him one more shot behind his ear or his shoulder, to make quite sure that he is not shamming; if he does not move, we will *first reload our empty barrel* and then advance, with our rifles still at the ready in case of accidents and pull him by his tail. Still no move; so we pull him out by his hind legs and tail and drag him into the shade, and sit on him while we wipe our manly brows and the excited crowd of beaters stand round and admire us and the tiger; our shikaris and orderlies then advance with beaming countenances and salaam low as they congratulate us on our success.

We then take out our pipes and fight the whole battle over again on the spot, our men listening respectfully to what we have to say, and when we have finished, they in turn take up the running and relate all their individual experiences during the beat. One man put up the tiger out of such and such a bush (probably a flight of his imagination this, but no matter—every one is in too good a temper to gainsay him); another man, one of the stops, saw the tiger coming towards him, and so on, and so on, all as pleased as sand-boys.

We then enquire how it came about that the tigress was in the beat without our having been aware of the fact previously; here the Head Shikari has a say in the matter, and tells us as follows:—  
“While putting up the spare stops on my way back to the beaters, to my surprise I suddenly came on the fresh footprints of a tigress heading from the east into the area of the beat where I knew the tiger was lying up; and as I knew there were no tracks on the western side to show that she had gone out of it, I told the beaters to be extra careful for there were now two tigers in the beat.”

The tape measure is then brought out, and the male tiger proves to measure 9' 7", and the tigress is 9' 1", thus both animals

are a bit above the average, the measurements being taken between two sticks placed respectively at the tip of the nose and the tip of the tail.

A strong superstition exists among natives that unless the moustaches of a slain tiger are burnt, bad luck will follow; they also have great faith in the moustaches of a tiger for medicinal purposes, and will therefore invariably pluck them out and steal them if they get half a chance. For this reason the sportsman should at once, in the presence of the men, ostentatiously count the number of moustaches on each lip of the tiger and then make the beast over into the personal charge of one of the orderlies, telling him that he will be held personally responsible for it. Or, better still, he may pluck them out and place them in a couple of envelopes, marking the latter "right" and "left" respectively, for a competent taxidermist will be able to re-insert them on the lips, on the black spots from whence they were taken. This is the best way; for, if not stolen, they are apt to fall out.

The two fore-feet and the two hind-feet respectively should be then tied together. Between the fore-feet thus secured two poles will be placed, and similarly two poles between the hind-feet; four men then will be told off for each pole, two at the ends of each pole. A turban, not a rope, to prevent chafing, will then be tied round the tiger's stomach, and a fifth pole passed through the turban thus secured, to which four men will be allotted. In this manner these twenty men are ample to carry the largest of tigers, for tigers do not usually weigh more than about 500 lbs., so that each of these men will at most only bear about 25 lbs.

The remaining men are then counted (to see that they have actually been present at the beat and not slipped away quietly in the jungles to turn up at camp in the evening to demand their wages, though they have shirked their work), and are told that each man as he proceeds homewards must pick up a fair-sized dry branch and bring it to be added to the stock of firewood in camp; this they will do willingly for it entails scarcely any trouble in the jungles, with the result that the pile of wood thus collected by eighty men is one of very respectable and useful dimensions.

We then make a move for camp, riding homewards at the head of a triumphant procession, with the tigers carried behind us. In the

summer, however, the animals must be skinned at once on the spot where they are shot, for in excessive heat, decomposition commences immediately after death, which loosens the hold of the hair in the skin and so causes it soon afterwards to come out in bunches.

On our arrival at camp, we find that the news of our success has preceded us, and we are met by a large crowd of villagers—men, women and children—who crowd round eagerly to see the enemy that has destroyed in the past so many of their valuable cattle, frequently kissing our feet and strewing our path with flowers.

We also find on our arrival that eight professional skimmers of the Chamar caste have already been collected in anticipation of our success. But our first duty now is to pay up and dismiss the beaters without unnecessary delay, for they would naturally become discontented if kept hanging about needlessly.

In all matters where the payment of money to natives is concerned, the sportsman should pay the money with his own hand to the man who has earned it, as only thus can he be certain that the money has been properly paid to the beaters.

The beaters should be placed in line and arranged in sections according to their villages, and the sportsman should pass down the line and with his *own hand* pay in small change to each man his day's wage (double in this case, in view of the tiger having been killed) in lieu of the gun-wad which the man will now give up.

Now a few words, in regard to the rates of payments. Many sportsmen, with more money than sense, needlessly spoil not only the market, but also spoil sport by overpaying beaters. This policy is a very shortsighted one, for it lessens the sportsman's chance of success; for if villagers find that they can obtain much more money by habitually acting as beaters than they can by following their ordinary occupation, it stands to reason that they will not be very keen on permitting the goose-that-lays the-golden-egg of their locality to be killed, namely, their local tiger.

I speak from the intimate and personal experience of a Forest Officer in such matters when I say that the class of men usually employed as beaters in jungle tracks (I refer in particular to the Central Provinces and to Mysore), in their ordinary every-day employment in the jungle, rarely earn more than one anna a day by

manual labour, this of course apart from what they gain from their fields. Once their little plot of land has been sown, the majority of the villagers are idlers for the remainder of the year, except, as above stated, when they earn at most one anna a day by doing odd jobs, by collecting wood, grass, honey, etc.

The official daily wage in the Central Provinces and Mysore is, or was in my time, two annas a day for each coolie, which is double what they would be earning otherwise, if they earn anything at all; so this is quite sufficiently liberal, while if he paid more, the sportsman would be cutting his own throat, as far as the chances of his success is concerned.

To return to our tigers which we have yet to skin. It would be remembered that the sooner after death the skin is removed the better—if possible before the animal gets cold; for not only is the skin then more flexible and will therefore stretch more, but the longer the treatment of the skin with the necessary ingredients is delayed, the greater will be the process of decomposition in the tissues of the skin, and consequently the less firm will the hold of the hair be in those tissues. In the summer or rainy seasons in India, such decomposition sets in almost immediately after death; hence the imperative necessity at such seasons of removing the skin *on the spot* immediately after death, when also the treatment of the skin with the necessary ingredients should not be delayed an hour longer than possible, while during the interval great care should be taken not to expose the skin to the sun. However, in winter much greater liberties can be taken, while in the present case we have shot our tigers towards the evening, and have taken care to protect them from the rays of the sun, so we bring our tigers back with us in state to camp. Here, however, we should delay the skinning operations no longer.

The animal should be turned over on his back, and a start made by severing the under-lip at the centre, then straight down to the middle of the throat, chest and stomach, cutting only just through the skin, and taking care not to penetrate into the abdominal cavity. Then a cut should be made through the centre of the pads of the fore-foot, and continued down the fore-arms to the centre of the chest, keeping fully in the middle of the white portion of the skin there, so that equal portions of white will remain on either side of the cut.

The cutting of the hind-legs is a somewhat intricate piece of work, in that it is almost invariably badly done. To better explain what I mean, I will refer to the human leg: if left to themselves, native skinners will invariably start from the heel (the pad), and after cutting up to the point below the knee, will continue straight on to the vent. Let the reader glance at his own thigh as he sits, and he will see that this operation would leave the whole of the skin of the inner portion of the thigh attached to the flank, thus making an unsightly flap (*vide* "B" in the attached sketch) which will have to be cut off later in order to preserve the symmetry of the skin, at the same time depriving a portion in the length of the skin (at "A").



FUR'S MARK WITH CHARCOAL.

To prevent this, the sportsman should take a piece of charcoal and draw a line from the heel to the under portion of the knee; he should then curve the line round (at the hock) to the knee-cap and continue up through the centre of the inner portion of the thigh (through the centre of the *white* portion on the inside of the thigh of the tiger) to the fork, giving, if anything, more of the white portion to the tail side of the skin than to the flanks. In this manner he will add to the appearance of length in the skin, and not waste it in unsightly flaps on the flanks which will have to be finally cut off and thrown away.

It will now be seen how necessary it is that the sportsman should see these preliminary cuttings himself. Great care should also be taken with the ears, eyes and lips; the roots of the ears should be scooped out as it were close to the skull, or the lower structure of them will afterwards present too large an aperture; the rims of the eyes must be severed from the bone with the very greatest of care, for if the rims of the eyes are cut by the knife or torn in the slightest degree, this portion being very thin, the tear will spread rapidly in the stretching and ruin the eye; it is a delicate piece of work, so go gently and cut close to the bone; the lips should be severed close to the gums, the thick portion of the lip should then be cut open from the inside by passing the knife between the mucous lining and the outer skin, without cutting the latter, so that the mucous lining or the skin of the inside portion of the lip can be treated and spread out as shown in the sketch. No bones or joints should be left in the pads, so these should be taken out right up to the claws; the inside grisly portions of the pads should be cut away as much as possible, or they will rot. The vertebræ of the tail preserved, when varnished, with a steel core, form interesting walking sticks. We may now leave the remainder of the skinning to be looked after by the orderlies, telling them to see that no lumps of meat and fat are left by careless skinning, which can easily be avoided now, but give a lot of trouble afterwards.

Having seen to the delicate portions of the skinning operations ourselves, we then assemble our personal men, namely, the two shikaris and the eight orderlies, and distribute to them the rewards for the tiger—the details of which are given later. We also call up the local bunnia and give him eight or ten rupees on behalf of our camp-followers in general, instructing the latter to hold a “panchayet” (a council) and to obtain from the bunnia—up to the amount given him—such articles, by way of a feast, that they may decide on, which will consist of some country-liquor, sweetmeats and perhaps a goat or two. It is good policy to give one’s camp-followers a reason in this manner to look forward to an occasion of success, for it makes them very keen to make searching enquiries among all the villagers among whom they have any dealings, or while travelling from camp to camp, so that the sportsman often obtains many a valuable hint in time in this manner.

We then have a refreshing tub and sit down to our dinner, after which we adjourn with our cigars and pegs to our roaring camp-fire outside, a fire some six feet in width and perhaps ten feet in height of flames, built over a round hole two feet deep in the ground and four feet in diameter which is for the purpose of proper ventilation of the fire and in order to allow the ashes to drop through and not choke the fire ; this is what the natives in the Central Provinces call a "dhuni."

Here we sit in our long arm-chairs and fight our day's battle over again, until the orderly announces that the removal of the skin has been completed, so we go and inspect the skin.

It is safest of course to peg out and treat the skin at once ; but the process is a long one to do properly, so that if it is done at night after a long and tiring day when everybody is feeling fagged, it is apt to be hurried and so done badly. But this is a bitterly cold winter night, with frost in the air, so we may safely defer the stretching of the skin till the morning, taking the precaution of preserving the flexibility of the skin by sousing it well in water. For this purpose we now take the skin down to the stream and wash it well in the water, thus freeing it of all traces of blood and dirt, and make it as clean as possible ; we then fold the skin double—hair outside—and hang it up in a tree, well out of the way of nocturnal marauders.

By this time we are probably feeling inclined for bed, so we adjourn to our tents and sleep the sleep of the just in spite of the noise which is possibly being made by our merry-making camp-followers. They have, however, deserved the occasion, so we give them full license to enjoy themselves in their own way ; nor will we worry those who may be sore of head in the morning. Treat your men like this and they will be ready to do anything for you.

In the morning the skin is again taken down to the stream and re-washed in the icy water ; after this it is spread on the grass—or other clean surface—hair upwards, and several men set to dry the hair with sheets or native "chadars," the sheets being changed for fresh ones as they become sodden. When the hair has been dried as much as possible in this manner, turpentine is then liberally rubbed well into the hair, after which large quantities of powdered black-pepper should be sprinkled thickly over the hair and rubbed well into it. The



turpentine and pepper is for the hair only to prevent insects getting at it ; for the preservation of the textures of the skin (not the hair) other ingredients will be used.

The skin must now be turned over and *all* the bullet-holes sewn up with fresh sinews taken for the purpose out of the tiger's fore arm ; such holes as will be required to be seen on the hair surface can be opened out again only when the operation of pegging out and treating of the skin has been completed ; by thus sewing up all the bullet holes in the skin, the liquid ingredients, which will be applied to the smooth surface of the skin after it has been pegged down, will be prevented from pouring through the holes and thus unnecessarily wetting the hairside underneath. The skin is now ready to be pegged down.

It must very carefully be kept in mind that the ultimate shape (and size) of the skin depends on the manner in which it has been stretched in the drying process after the removal of the skin from the body ; if one leg is stretched crooked during this drying process it will remain crooked ever afterwards ; for even the curers (though they may deny it) are unable to remedy such defects short of cutting up the skin and resewing it as you would a suit of clothes. If in the preliminary stretching the skin is made long and narrow, it will be returned from the skin-curers long and narrow, and so on. Therefore the utmost care must be taken to make the most of the skin while stretching it in the first instance, and above all to obtain a perfect symmetry.

Many authorities say that a skin should never be dried in the sun. In regard to this I agree only in reference to the summer sun when, if good shade is not obtainable, a tent should be pitched, so as not to allow the skin to dry too quickly ; if pegged out in the blazing sun in summer the skin will be baked as dry and stiff as a board, and probably crack or break into bits—at any rate it would be ruined for curing purposes. On the other hand, I have not found that harm results from pegging a skin out in the winter sun, when it has otherwise been suitably treated ; while I have frequently known irreparable harm to be done by pegging the skin out in the shade at this season, for in this way the drying process of the skin is delayed to over a week, so that the unexposed surface below becomes quite

mouldy with the damp heat thus generated by this prolonged fixture which loosens the texture of the skin and so causes the hair to come away in bunches, besides attracting and even breeding various insects which may destroy the hair in a few hours, while white-ants also in this time will certainly have worked their way up through all obstacles to the skin. The skin should *never* be kept pegged on one spot for more than at most four days ; usually in three days' time the skin is sufficiently dry to permit it being taken up, removed and repegged on a fresh spot without any alteration in the form or contraction on the part of the skin during the process.

On removing the skin in this manner on the third, or at most fourth day, the bedding underneath will be found to be quite damp, and that a regular dew is on the hair of the skin ; the latter should be carefully wiped perfectly dry and a fresh and copious supply of powdered black-pepper applied ; it should be noted that no ingredients that are liable to stain, such as powdered tobacco, etc., should be applied to skin that is wet or damp. The skin should then be re-pegged on a freshly prepared ground, and over fresh bedding. The pegs should not be finally removed until the skin is *quite* dry, or it will shrink and become distorted. But we are anticipating, for we have yet to peg out the skin.

The ground must first be prepared by being spread over with a thick layer of *cold* ashes, which to a great extent acts as a preventative to insects coming up through the ground to the skin, though, if given enough time, white-ants will build their mud-channels even through a layer of ashes. On top of the ashes should be laid a bedding of *coarse* jungle or thatching grass—the flat-bladed, sharp-edged grass with which the sportsman has probably become only too well acquainted on occasions when he has incautiously caught hold of some of it as he passes along in the jungles to find that he has thereby cut his hand perhaps severely. White-ants dislike this grass, for it cuts even their iron jaws, while they are very partial to ordinary straw, which should therefore never be placed under a drying skin if possible for it attracts white-ants.

I will now refer to the attached sketch. Spread the skin, hair nethermost, on this bedding, some six inches thick ; drive a peg (No. 1) through each of the nostrils then stretch the skin out straight and fix

the end of the tail down with another peg (No. 2); in doing the latter, pull the skin out only to the length which you consider will at the same time leave sufficient amount for the breadth of skin. A well-stretched and cured skin of a ten-foot tiger, now before me as I write, from which the accompanying illustration of a typically stretched skin is taken, measures 11 feet 1 inch in length and 3 feet 6 inches in width; in curing of course the skin shrinks somewhat to what it was stretched to in the drying process. So if this be taken as a standard, any tiger that measures over 9 feet in the flesh, its skin when stretched for drying, should on no account be less than 3 feet in width, as shown by the figures:—

$$10 : 3.5 :: 9 : x$$

$$10 x = 31.5$$

$$x = 3.15$$

And by the same calculation, the skin of a nine-foot tiger should not be more than about 10 feet in length after it is cured. I remember seeing an extraordinary looking tiger skin in the shop-window of a well-known taxidermist in London, which was apparently the admiration of a crowd of ignorant onlookers, for it measured no less than about 11 feet in length; on the other hand, it was scarcely two feet in width, so that it looked more like a snake's skin than that of a tiger.

Roughly speaking, the skin when pegged out on the ground should not be more than at most 14 to 16 inches longer from the tip of nose to the tip of the tail than it was between these points when on the body of the animal.

In pegging out the present skin, we assume that the tiger in life measured 9 feet 4 inches; we will therefore now, in pegging down the tail and nostrils, stretch the skin between these points, measuring with a tape measure to 10 feet 6 inches; this will enable us to stretch it in width to about 3 feet 5 inches. Thus, roughly speaking, when pegged on the ground, the width of a tiger skin should be nearly one-third of its length.

Having secured these two starting points satisfactorily, and also fixed pegs (Nos. 3) at the root of the tail, our next care must be to get the four legs at correct angles to the body, for many skins are rendered unsightly by having the legs stretched either too straightly at right angles to the body, or at various angles. For this purpose,

fasten a cord to peg No. 2 at the tip of the tail and pull in taut down the centre of the body and tie it to another peg in front of the nose. Then similarly fasten two other tightly stretched cords, one across the root of the tail, and the other across the neck (as shown in the illustrations) so that each is exactly at right angles to the centre cord; then peg out the four legs, with reference to these two cords, as shown in the sketch—pulling and stretching out the skin now as much as ever you possibly can (for you have the length already secured) and knock in pegs Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7, 8, 9 on either side simultaneously. Thereafter, in putting down the pegs, follow the numbers shown on the sketch, always pulling the two opposite pegs simultaneously to the utmost.

The head of the tiger in the skin, which is a kind of a bag, is frequently spoilt in shape by being pegged out and dried *flat*. To remedy this when pegs Nos. 21 have been secured, pegs Nos. 18, 19 and 20 should be loosened, and the hollow of the head portion of the skin stuffed firmly with dry grass not too tightly or the shape may become distorted, so as to make it stand up above the level of the remainder of the skin, particular care being taken to see that ears within lie flatly and naturally so that the cores outside will be seen as shown in the sketch. I should have mentioned that all the fleshy parts such as the ears (both inside and out), eyes, lips and pads (it is generally best to cut away the pads altogether, for they are useless) should be applied plentifully with alum, for without the free use and ingraining of such an astringent here, decomposition is very apt to occur in the tissues of those thick fleshy parts with the result that the hair on them will come away in bunches. Rub in alum first and arsenical soaps second, both in liquid and dry form, so as to regularly pickle these parts with it, the arsenic will protect it from insects. Having stuffed the head as shown in the sketch, the pegs Nos. 18, 19 and 20 must be refixed into the ground. The inner portions of the upper lip which have been opened out must also be well rubbed with alum and pegged out to dry. The skin is now firmly pegged out; it only remains to be treated.

First pack the whole skin round, all along the edges, with a small embankment of sand. This is to prevent the various liquids with

which the skin is now to be treated, from running over and wetting the ground around the skin.

The Chamars or skinnners should then again be set to work on the skin, to skin the skin as it were, and remove every trace of flesh and fat that may have remained; this will take perhaps a couple of hours of hard work, when the skin should appear to the eye as clean almost as a sheet of paper. It should be covered with a layer of *cold* ashes (hot, or even warm ashes will make the hair fall out) which should be rubbed or kneaded well into the skin with roughish but not too rough stones; the chemicals in the ashes—especially the ash of the Sarj tree (*Terminalia tomentosa*)—when combined with the fat or grease on the skin converts the grease into soap, which should then be washed off with water, the latter being mopped up each time to enable the operation with the ashes to be repeated three or four times.

When the ashes have been finally cleaned off with water in this manner, thereby also removing the grease in the form of soap, wipe the skin as dry as possible. Then proceed to wash the skin in a similar manner with a copious mixture of curds and alum; alum alone makes the skin afterwards too stiff and dry, the curds prevent this by making the skin soft and pliable without, at the same time loosening the grains of the skin which have been made firm by the astringent properties of the alum. Mop up, and treat several times with curds and alum in this manner. Then, again, wipe the skin dry, and rub dry alum well in with the stones, using it copiously; then, without removing the alum, add large quantities of cold ashes, and rub the two in together in the same manner, removing and replacing with fresh quantities of this dry mixture as long as it shows a tendency to become damp under this process. When it no longer shows damp, the skin may be swept clean, and a thin layer of the same dry mixture spread evenly over the whole skin, which may then be left, and the sand around the skin may be cleared away.

In about two hours' time, however, this layer will probably be found to have become damp having drawn up and absorbed the moisture of the skin beneath; it should then be removed and replaced with a fresh layer; and so on from time to time, until it ceases to absorb moisture.

It will now be seen how necessary it was to sew up *all* the bullet-holes in the skin ; but when the treatment of the stretched skin has finally been completed, those well-placed bullet-holes which the sportsman wishes to be seen on the hair-surface of the skin—to show at least that the tiger has been shot and not poisoned—may be opened with a pen-knife by severing the stitches, when, with the tension of the skin on all sides, they will at once open out into neat round holes.

The skin should not be taken up under three days, by which time it is probably dry enough to retain its shape and size while being removed to a fresh spot and bedding, as already described ; while doing this the ears inside should be particularly dried as much as possible and then filled with dry alum.

All the alum used must of course be powdered. The arsenical soap must be worked up into a paste with warm water, and applied cold to the lips, eyes and pads, and liquid when put on the ears, both inside and out. A plentiful supply of arsenical soap and alum should always be taken on a trip such as this ; also turpentine. Sportsmen have two things to contend with : decomposition in the texture of the skin, causing the hair to come off—which is prevented by the astringent or binding properties of the alum which should be applied *first* ; and secondly, insects, which eat and destroy both hair and skin, especially in the fleshy parts, which is prevented by the use of turpentine and arsenical soap ; without the use of the latter, I have found that the ears are invariably ruined.

One point I have omitted, and that is regarding the tongue, which should be preserved, in order to be stuffed and set in the head, should the latter be afterwards mounted. For this purpose cut out the tongue of the tiger well from the back of the throat ; then make a cut from the back of the *lower* portion to not quite the end or tip of the tongue, and so remove the outer coating or skin of the tongue, the portion at the tip being turned back and removed like the end of a sock from a foot. This skin should be freed as far as possible, on the inside of flesh, by means of a knife ; it should then be left to pickle for a whole night in a strong solution of powdered alum and water, after which it should be dipped into a solution of arsenical soap and then hung up to dry, taking care

MEET THE HERKS AND FAMILY ON A BOATING EXPEDITION



INDIAN CHILDREN — shot 6th January 1910  
Length 15 feet 6 inches  
Girth 61 inches  
Expanse of Jaws 1 foot 6 inches  
Width of Jaws 18 inches.

N.B. Before going further I should like to acknowledge here my indebtedness in learning—since the printing of this book—a new method of tanning and curing skins, which has enabled us to tan at home to perfection the skin of the ugly monster shown in the photograph over page ; as well as those of many other animals—both tanning and curing with hair on—including those of Black Buck, Nilgiri, Pig, Jackals and birds. By these methods we lately cured at home, within a week, 55 Black Buck skins, turning them out almost as soft as Chamois leather and as sweet, at a cost of about 2d. per skin for ingredients and labour. These skins cut into black and white strips and sewn together under our supervision, now form a magnificent and unique carpet in our drawing-room, and is the curious admiration of our friends. These methods are equally successful with bird-skins, for within the last few days we have cured forty Grebe skins fit for a lady's cloak. No wonder we are pleased with our new acquirement, which is of the utmost value and importance to every true sportsman in the wilds, for how many good skins are ruined annually for the want of just this bit of knowledge, and have to be thrown away finally ; and the methods are so very simple, and the ingredients are to be had in every village bazaar at small cost throughout India.

The methods I refer to are those given in a new and valuable little book just published at the Madras Press, Mussoorie, India, by Mr. G. H. Goutiere of the U. P. Police, entitled "Taxidermy for India and the Sportsman's Vade Mecum," costing U. P. only Rs. 3-3 per copy.

R. C. H.— 22-6-1910.



that a kite does not fly off with it, though it would be bad for that kite.

At night a tiger skin pegged on the ground should be protected from the dew and nocturnal marauders, by being covered up with an old carpet or grass, on top of which a couple of native cots should be laid flat, legs upwards, and the whole weighted securely with stones judiciously placed thereon, though a watchman should also be deputed to guard it at night.

When the skin is finally taken up it should not be folded, but should be conveyed flat on a native cot suspended on a pole carried by two men; two or three skins, one on top of the other, may be conveyed in this manner, a string being fastened to the leg portions to prevent these from flopping about. I have frequently had three or four cots coming along in this manner in charge of an orderly in the rear of my camp procession.

From the tiger's body also, the two little floating or clavicle bones found between the neck and fore-arm, may be preserved and made into ornaments or charms, being considered as "lucky-bones."

The skull of the tiger should on no account be boiled as is sometimes recommended in sporting books, for by this means the whole structure is very liable to fall to pieces, cracking and breaking up, especially the teeth, which in a very short time after being thus boiled are certain to split up or break away in little pieces and so ruin the appearance of a head when set up, the head being toothless. The easiest way is to clean it as well as possible with a knife only, of course taking out the brain, and then bury it in a large ant-heap, and then hang it up in a tree for the wind, air, and insects to complete the remainder of the cleaning process. This may not be as clean a method as boiling it, but it has the advantage of maintaining the skull and teeth sound. I do not like putting it into a stream to rot—it is apt to be taken off by some animal or other.

The fat of a tiger is much prized as a cure for rheumatism; it may therefore be carefully collected off the body of the animal, and after being clarified or melted, and skimmed, placed in air-tight bottles. The natives often eat the liver, as it is supposed to make them courageous. Many a useful friend among natives may be made by a present of a little tiger's fat.

With reference to the liver it is a popular idea among natives that the age of a tiger can be approximately told by the number of lobes, large or small, in the liver of the tiger. My personal experience is that a tiger up to three years of age always has three lobes to its liver, only once finding the exception to prove this rule in a tiger one-year-old that had four lobes instead of three to its liver. After three years they appear to grow one extra lobe in their liver for each year of their life up to about, as far as I can now recollect, fifteen years or fifteen lobes. At any rate, it is an established fact that old tigers have a far greater number of lobes to their livers than a tiger of three years or under; this being so, there is no reason that I am aware of, why a theory at least should not be formed on this basis in calculating the age of a tiger. Apart from this, however, tigers show their age, chiefly in the condition of their teeth, being in old age yellow, worn or broken, and in youth clean and brightly polished, exactly as in the case of dogs. Again, in old age, the colour of the tiger becomes very much lighter generally—the cupid bows open out and the ends of the bow and the chord forming into straight lines, opening out further and further apart with age, until all the lines are far apart and much more faintly marked and thin—this is chiefly with male tigers. In young tigers, both male and female, the lines are broad and black, and close together, the cupid bows clearly and thickly set, and the ground work of the skin of a much darker shade than in old tigers, the latter as a whole being much lighter in every way. For the varieties of tigers see chapter on panthers, in which the classification of all the larger feline of India is given.

As pegs for stretching skins, a supply of some four hundred flat iron nails should be kept, the nails being about six or eight inches in length and about half an inch across the flat portion, with the heads turned down—the kind commonly used in India on walls for hanging up heavy objects. If those have not been taken, pegs of the same length may be made from solid young male bamboo canes, the thickness of a finger; they should be sharply pointed and well rounded at the heads with a knife to prevent splitting. Small tags in the skin (not marked in the sketch) will of course form, wherever the pegs are put in round the edges,

which will be cut off when the skin is cured. The pegs should be carefully examined at short intervals, and re-hammered if found to have been drawn by the skin while drying, or the skin will become distorted.

The tiger's footprints shown in the sketch almost speak for themselves, the male tiger's forefeet marks are always much more round than those of a tigress both in the toe and pads, there is no



MALE TIGER'S FOOTPRINT.

mistaking the two. The footmark of a tigress is an ugly misshapen thing, and much more elongated—especially in the toes—than that of a male tiger, her hindfeet being even more elongated and misshapen than her forefeet, and are smaller. The hindfeet marks of a male tiger are very similar to that of a tigress' forefeet, I can recognize the difference when I see them, but it is so slight that I am unable to define it, not having the photographs of a tigress' feet as I have of a tiger's.

When moving at either a slow crouch or a walk, the hindfeet of a tiger usually exactly cover the spot vacated by the forefeet, but crosswise—crosswise, because it stands to reason that an animal must have at least one leg on the ground simultaneously on *either* side to preserve its balance, thus the right hindfoot takes the place vacated by the left forefoot and then same with the other two feet. In feline, of course, this is a provision of nature to aid the animal in

performing a *silent* stalk; the eyes being over the forefeet the animal is able to pick the spots on which to place its forefeet where they will make the least noise, that is to say, to avoid placing its forefoot on a dry stick or leaf that might crack and so betray it, there being no eyes in the rear portion of the animal to guide its hindfeet in a similar manner, it instinctively conveys the hindfoot to cover the exact spot that had been chosen for, occupied, and then vacated, by the forefoot, thus avoiding the risk of accidentally putting its hindfoot on a rolling stone or a dry stick which would make a noise. Thus a tiger usually leaves only a double trail as if it had only two feet instead of four, after the style of the trail left by a man



MAL TRICK'S HINDFOOT

walk no through the prints of the hindfeet will usually be found overlapping lightly to the rear of the print of the forefoot, perhaps half an inch or more. It is only when the tiger is standing or moving fast that the prints of all four feet of the animal will be seen on the ground. These facts serve to show the manner and pace at which the animal was travelling, and also the temper or state of mind of the animal at that time.

The determining factors in the age of a footprint in soft earth or sand are dew, wind and actions of insects over it. A perfectly

fresh footprint has a very smooth, shiny and firm appearance about it with all its edges very sharply cut, upstanding and clearly defined; the wind breaks down these sharp upstanding edges, especially between the toes, and gives it a generally rougher appearance; the dew loosens the smooth firm appearance and gives it a minutely pitted appearance, making it altogether duller; insects, small birds, mice, spiders, etc., of course, leave their own trails over such prints, regarding which commonsense conclusions must be made. On firm damp mud, or damp clay, footprints are very deceptive; if it is more than twenty-four hours' old, it is often impossible to say whether it is only a day and half old or a month old; if it is under twenty-four hours' old, it can usually be recognized as such by its more shiny appearance, which afterwards becomes dulled by the action of the dew and wind.

We have disposed of the matters referred to in the sketch. We will now consider the question which is of vital importance to sportsmen of moderate means, namely, what our tiger has actually cost us, apart from ordinary living expenses which have to be met, no matter where the sportsman may be. To show that this is not such a ruinous pursuit or out of the reach of sportsmen of moderate means if carried out on commonsense methods is the object with which this book has been written.

I have sometimes heard of such absurd statements as each tiger that is shot costing the sportsman from £100 to £200 per tiger, or Rs. 3,000 per tiger—the cost of a motor-car!

In the present case we have done everything practically off our own bat, and done it ourselves in person; so there is no need to pay exorbitantly to any one, nor under these circumstances will any one expect us to do so. It is sufficient to pay the hired beaters their understood local wage, and whether we will pay a small extra tip to our personal servants, who receive fixed salaries for the work for which they are enlisted, remains entirely at our own pleasure, and is not a right.

In the present case, in view of the success, and as an inducement to obtain like successes in future, we will give the following rewards, including double wages to the beaters and other incidental expenses in encompassing the death of the tiger:—

	Rs.
(a) Head Shikari ... ..	10
(b) Assistant Shikari ... ..	5
(c) Chief Orderly ... ..	4
(d) Seven orderlies, @ Rs. 3 each ... ..	21
(e) Two local men, who also tend to the buffs, @ Rs. 2 ... ..	4
(f) 108 benders and stops. @ 4 annas each ... ..	27
(g) For local wood-god one goat @ 12 annas, and 4 annas in ghee, cocoanuts and flowers ... ..	1
(h) For prayers of local Brahman priest ... ..	2
(i) For, say, 4 buffs killed for each tiger shot, @ Rs. 4 per buff	16
(j) For feast to camp followers ... ..	10
	— £. s. d.
Total ..	100=6 13 1

This is what our tiger actually costs us. Against this the sportsman may, if he wishes—and there are very few that don't in the Central Provinces—draw a reward from Government the sum of Rs. 50 for each tiger shot; the skin of the tiger, uncured, is also worth, in the open market if not to the sportsman, at the very least Rs. 100, if not Rs. 150. Therefore, in so far from losing in actual hard cash, we find ourselves the gainers in actual hard cash by Rs. 100. So people need not be so very afraid to go in for tiger-shooting on the score of expense if they work on the commonsense methods described.

Before closing this chapter, I will give a few random notes that may be of use.

Remember, that jungle-dogs hunt entirely by day and not by night, hence the necessity of bringing in the buffs at daylight, when they have been tied out in the jungles overnight. Tigers dislike jungle-dogs and invariably clear out of the jungle where they are, if for no other reason than that the dogs soon drive out all other game from the jungle, so that the tigers have nothing to feed on. I have frequently been told by natives of instances of jungle-dogs having actually killed and eaten tigers, and in one case of a tigress having climbed a sapling in order to escape from the dogs. I myself have frequently seen places, where the tracks on the ground undoubtedly showed that a tiger had been kept bailed up by jungle-dogs for a considerable time; the blood-marks on these places may

have been from the tiger, or from the dogs that he killed ; whether the latter had been eventually eaten by the tiger, or by the other dogs after the tiger had made off, I could not determine. Jungle-dogs when in large numbers are very bold, and in such cases sometimes effect to ignore the presence of human beings, merely trotting by slowly or stop to take an impudent stare, but they very rarely, if ever, presume to attack human beings, unless they have very small cubs, when even a pair of them will fiercely attack, or at least make serious demonstrations, until the cubs have got clear. It is advisable not to try for tigers in jungles where there are traces of jungle-dogs.

The presence of a tiger in a jungle can often be detected by the marks of their claws on soft-barked trees, which they scratch, often habitually the same tree periodically, in order to clean their claws. Also tigers, like cats, are very particular to cover up their droppings by scratching the earth over it, so that long scratches, several feet in length, will generally be found on the side of every favourite nightly promenade. On all ordinary occasions tigers keep their claws drawn up well within their sheaths, and never show in their tracks, except for the first two bounds after the moment they have been fired at. If they have been missed, the claws will be again drawn up into the sheaths after the first two bounds, for to keep them unnaturally extended jars their feet as well as spoils their claws ; if, however, they have been wounded, in their pain they keep their claws extended for a much longer period as they bound along — perhaps for a hundred yards—thus leaving over this distance a series of deep and widely spread claw-marks in the ground they have passed over—a sure sign of a serious hit.

The character of the blood tracks will often indicate the nature of the wound : if light and frothy, it is a lung shot ; if dark and clotty, it is probably a liver shot ; if there are lumps of fat on the trail, it is certain to be a stomach shot ; if the blood is only thin and light coloured, it is probably an insignificant wound such as through the fleshy portion of one of the limbs, or a superficial wound only ; if splinters of bone are found, it is a limb only that is probably broken. The liver shot generally proves fatal within at most four hundred yards and within half an hour, the animal being choked with blood ;

the same result often occurs when the paunch is broken, the food coming up into the tiger's mouth and choking him—this has been my experience, though I have heard it denied. If the lung only is damaged, the animal generally escapes altogether from the ken of the sportsman, though it will probably die eventually many miles away. If a stomach shot, when the entrails are broken, leaving bits of fat on the trail, the beast will almost invariably lie down within four to six hundred yards and get violently sick; if now left undisturbed, it will remain quite close by and die within twelve hours; but if pressed immediately after receiving the wound, it will travel for many miles and so probably be lost altogether. The height of the wound can be told by the height of the blood-marks on the various objects passed or brushed. If there is a double trail of blood on either side of the track, it shows that the bullet has passed through the body and out again on the further side. If a wounded tiger gets sick, and has not been disturbed for twelve hours, it will usually be found stone dead within at most four hundred yards of the spot where it first got sick, though it will probably vomit again several times at intervals of sixty to eighty yards. Vomiting is a sure sign of a fatal wound.

When a wounded tiger is aware that it is being pursued, it often uses an awkward trick of doubling back on its own trail and then hiding behind some cover on one side of it and awaiting his pursuers, who will thus be taken unawares in the flank while passing along the trail. Make it an unalterable rule never to follow a wounded feline *uphill*; always work round and get above it on to the highest point. Use buffs or dogs when following wounded feline. However, it is best to do away with the necessity of having to follow wounded animals at all, by placing your shot properly in the first instance. I never shoot at the head if it can be avoided, for it is too uncertain; the brain is a very small mark situated right at the top and back portion of the tiger's skull, where, if the bullet strikes on the convex portion of the skull, it is certain to glance off without penetrating it in the least. To prove this, let the sportsman take an empty *chatty* or earthen pot, and having reversed it with the round portion upwards (on a level with the gun) shoot so that the bullet will strike on the convex portion it will be found that though the bullet struck the fragile object, it has not pierced or even broken it, but has



simply run round the curve, leaving only a white mark and then glanced harmlessly off. Moreover, in another chapter at the end of this book, proof will be found of a case in which a tiger had his brains knocked out on to the ground by a bullet, and yet lived for over twelve hours and went over two miles. Of all I like the neck-shot (N—see both sketches) the best, to which the tiger collapses in a heap on the spot, without even a roar, simply falling forward on to his knees and nose with a gurgling sob; but aim *low* in the neck. The centre of the shoulder-blade also is always a deadly shot with a solid bullet, as it is a “nerve-centre,” and the tiger collapses in a heap. In firing at the heart, wait for the elbow to be extended well forwards, for it might intercept and deflect the bullet, which, if it be an explosive, also may only explode externally on the bone. If owing to any obstacle being in the way, only the rear half of the tiger is visible, the kidney-shot (K—see sketch) will usually be fatal on the spot (especially when a shell is used), or at most he will fall over dead within eighty yards. Panthers, as a rule, stand a great deal more lead than tigers, though on occasions a particular tiger may be found with stamina similar to panthers and takes a lot of killing.

When on the ground, never fire at dangerous game as long as they have their head pointed in your direction—don’t do as I have done, but do as I say—wait till they turn and begin to move in another direction before you fire, for on being struck such animals always bound straight forward in the direction in which they happen to have their heads pointed at the moment, so that if you are standing in their path, you are certain to be picked up during their rush and severely mauled. Also never fire at either bears, panthers or tigers that are above you, for in such cases they invariably charge down at their aggressor when probably nothing will be able to prevent their impetus making good their charge.

The heads of these dangerous game when charging stand about eighteen inches from the ground, and in a charge are very apt to be missed by being fired *over* unless the sportsman has previously practised with his rifle at small objects at this height at short distances. In practising for the first time in this manner and at this depressed angle, he will probably find that he will be thrown considerably off his balance and that the shots are going very high

when quickly fired. By short distance I mean from ten feet to twenty yards—the distance of such rushes.

There is a great deal of “bluff” in a tiger’s composition, both in his terrifying noise and in his charge, so that if the sportsman stands firm and faces his demonstration coolly, the tiger very much oftener than not will fail to make good his charge by pulling up short half way and turning tail, thus giving the required opportunity for a safe and certain shot. But if the man instead exhibits his weakness and fear by himself turning tail, there is no earthly hope for him, for the tiger will then be certain to make good his charge and pounce on him before he has gone many yards.

Wounded tigers, if they can get at the wound with their tongues, keep it clean by constantly licking it, for they know instinctively the danger from maggots and other impurities. If they cannot reach the wound with their tongues, they at once go to the nearest pool and roll and plaster the wound thickly over with a coating of mud, which they allow to dry on top of the wound—all animals do this to keep the flies from laying their eggs in the wound.

On being struck by a bullet, a tiger invariably answers to the pain thus caused by a roar, though he will also frequently roar when fired at though not hit, simply from fright and surprise, but if he bounds away silently, he is certainly missed clean.

Male tigers are easier to manage than females, and very rarely charge, even when wounded, being much more easy going and good tempered. Probably in 95 per cent. of mauling cases, the aggressor has always been a female and not a male. It was a tigress that mauled me, and it was always a tigress in almost every other similar case that I know or heard of.

In my estimation there are about three adult female tigers to every adult male tiger, the reason probably being, for motives of jealousy, that a male tiger kills every male tiger he meets and has the strength to kill, provided it is not his own cub. Male cubs also are cast loose from their mothers much earlier than are the females. But probably the chief reason is that male tigers fight more among themselves, and so kill each other off over questions of love.

In cases of particularly bad temper in tigers, the cause is frequently due to pain caused by toothache when teeth have been broken in

gnawing a bone, or have decayed; also in killing porcupines in mistake perhaps for a small pig. Tigers often got pierced by quills in the feet, neck and mouth, which, if they are unable to pull out, fester and cause them excruciating pain. I have seen a tiger's pads quite rotten from such a wound, while I have frequently found quills under the skin of the forearms and neck of a tiger.

With reference to the mythical old and solitary jackal which is supposed to accompany the person of a tiger to warn him of danger and call him to dinner, in my opinion this is all bunkam. Of course jackals are frequently found eating at the remains of an animal killed by a tiger, in the same manner that they would be found eating carrion anywhere else; but this does not prove that a particular jack is in the personal service of the tiger as superstition tries to make out. The call of the solitary jack called by the natives *koelabuloo* or *warrada* may and is equally heard hundreds of miles from the haunts of tigers. They are toothless, old and mangy animals, very apt to go mad at any time, who for some reason have been out-casted by their companions and condemned to lead a solitary old age like many other species of wild animals—probably in the case of jackals because they are no longer of any use to the pack, or on account of their mange, which they perhaps know by instinct is contagious. Their voices now undergo a total change quite unlike their ordinary blood-curdling howls, being—like their call of fear—a sudden, hair-raising and prolonged unearthly yell, enough to fill any superstitious native with all kinds of weird ideas as to their ghostly qualities as special guardians of tigers, etc. At any rate, I should be very disturbed if I were bitten by one of these mangy brutes. I have come to the conclusion, that mange is one of the causes of madness among canine animals in the winter in India—the intense cold of Upper India causing them such intense suffering in their hairless condition that it affects their brain and so causes them to go mad. In Dehra Dun regularly every winter we have an epidemic of madness for which I am convinced this is the chief cause. For this reason, at least every mangy dog in the bazaars, and every mangy jack seen about, should at once be destroyed.

Legends and superstitions in regard to tigers are innumerable, for which I have not sufficient space to go into. It will be enough to

mention that so superstitious are the jungle people in regard to tigers, that they will rarely speak of them by name, deeming it as certain bad luck to do so, and consequently refer to him in an abstract manner, as the "big cat," "raja," "nai" (a dog), "jamadar," etc., etc., the idea apparently being that if they call him by his proper name he might overhear them using it and revenge on them the presumption.

In Hindustan proper, the native shikaris usually call the tiger the "sher," "bagh," "nahar" or "see"—"seni" being the feminine of the latter. In speaking of a panther, remember that natives more readily understand its name of "baghera," than other names for it.

In speaking of the length of tigers, I am afraid, in giving my honest opinion, I will rub up a number of people the wrong way. However, here goes:—Except a few freaks of nature, such as men nine feet in height, and as rare, I do not believe there are any tigers in India who, fairly measured, are more than eleven feet in length from the tip of the nose to the tip of the tail between pegs and before the skin has been removed *from the body*. So, in my opinion, those who say they have shot tigers which, thus measured, exceeded eleven feet in length, are either drawing the long-bow or have shot one of these extraordinary "freaks of nature" to which I have referred.

When after tigers, never shoot at any other kind of game during the day, whether it be a bear, a panther or any other: many a good *hundobust* has been spoilt by thoughtless and selfish sportsmen being guilty of this.

The damage done by tigers is greatly exaggerated when this comes to be weighed against the good they do by keeping down other game, which would otherwise over-run and destroy the country. Tigers are often credited with a great deal more than they are really guilty of. A number of years ago a man-eating tiger suddenly appeared in the Chhattisgarh District of the Central Provinces, and travellers along the road in a certain locality were snapped up with great frequency and regularity. Government offered a largely enhanced reward for its destruction, and relays of sportsmen tried after it in turn, but though they found the footmarks of the tiger and plenty of blood where the victims had been seized, none were

successful in obtaining even a glimpse of the tiger. At last one sportsman (not myself), who was smarter than the rest, noticed that on the scene of a fresh kill that had taken place almost under his nose, the footmarks of a human being which were considerably smaller than those which could have been made by the feet of the victim, who by his clothes appeared to be a wealthy man.

This set the sportsman thinking, and on making further enquiries, he learnt that all the former victims also had apparently been well-to-do men, but as they were all travellers of unknown residence, and always alone when attacked, no one could say what valuables they might or might not have had. The sportsman's theory now became more strong, namely, that there had been some foul play, and not due to a tiger at all; so the matter was placed in the hands of the police, with the result that a *jogi* who had lately taken up his residence on the road in this neighbourhood was arrested, and with him were found two stuffed tiger's pads and all the jewellery and cash which he had robbed from the men he had murdered under the name of a man-eating tiger. Thus the tiger was again unjustly accused. Native professional shikaris also are not above using the stuffed pads of tigers to aid them in the prosecution of their profession.

But I must really, in mercy to the reader, call a halt in this otherwise endless flow of "random notes."

Before closing I should mention, in reference to the numerous and various details of systems and methods of shooting described in this chapter, that if the routine of these details are not again specified in other chapters when the same methods are being employed, it must be taken for granted that they have been nevertheless carried out as a matter of routine, though the specific mention of a number of such details have been omitted in order not to confuse and disjoint the thread of the story.



## CHAPTER II.

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GHOGLI, CHINDWARA DISTRICT.

*21th March 1887.*

At the commencement of the year 1887, when in charge of the Chindwara Division, persistent complaints reached me of increasing depredations caused by a very old cattle-lifting tiger whom the natives of the locality positively assured me was known by them personally to have regularly visited the neighbourhood of their village Ghogri every hot season for no less than 40 years. Of this of course I was at first sceptical, but when I finally killed this tiger and beheld his enormous proportions and other indications of advanced age, I fully believed their statement as to his age; for he was, with perhaps only one exception, the largest tiger that I have ever seen killed.

The complaints however, emanated only from cattle-grazers who had taken out licenses to graze their cattle in Government forests, who consequently were the chief sufferers from the proclivities of this old tiger; otherwise owing to his well-known good temper and easy-going ways he was looked upon by the inhabitants with good-natured tolerance, and even with affection, for it was well known to all that he never did any human being any harm, and even boys were able to drive him off by stoning him when his attentions became too pressing in the direction of the cattle in their charge.

For a tiger to have reached this age safely, it followed that he was pretty well up to all the "ropes" in regard to the wiles of sportsmen—so much so in fact that these gentry had for years given up his quest in despair, for this cunning old gentleman had long since learnt to have nothing whatever to do with their treacherous hostilities in the shape of tempting young bulls tied by the leg of a nigh to a stump, in lonely places in the jungles. His footmarks could show that he had frequently walked round and round such baits—but touch them? not he! We might well imagine such an old veteran chuckling to himself: "Na, na, me friend, there's no green in this child's eye, so you may take that lump of India-rubber to the Marines!"

His last escape was two years before from Mr. T., the former Deputy Commissioner of the District, who wounded him in the shoulder with a 10-bore *conical* bullet. But, strange to say, he recovered, and was in consequence looked upon by the natives with superstitious awe, and was considered invulnerable; with the result that now they were less ready than ever to help sportsmen in what they were convinced were futile endeavours.

Consequently sportsmen, both native and European, left him now in peace, with the result that he became so daring in his depredations among cattle that Government grazing revenues began to fall off in this neighbourhood, which to me, as the Forest Officer in charge of the forests, was a matter of official concern.

Finally, however, this tiger committed the heinous crime of killing a man!—some one who trespassed too far on his good nature, by blundering on to the top of him as he lay on the carcase of a bullock, and the tiger killed him in a panic.

This accident afforded the cattle-owners an excellent opportunity to agitate at Head-quarters for special measures to be taken to destroy this tiger, for "had he not killed a man"—and the upshot was that the District Magistrate asked me particularly to go out to Ghogri and try and kill the beast.

On arriving at the scene, I was concerned to find that a certain faction of Brahmans (priests) had taken it into their heads to deify this tiger, and I was concerned because I found that I would now have to work in the face of the almost fanatical opposition of the

followers of this faction—while, it must be remembered, that Brahmins have the greatest influence over the ignorant natives who look upon them as gods on earth, to be cursed by whom is a much dreaded calamity.

Fortunately, however, I found that there was also a rival faction in the locality, who were at bitter enmity with each other, which at once gave me my cue. An appeal to the rival faction for their prayers on the behalf of my endeavours, accompanied by a present of money, sweetmeats, ghee and coconuts, ostensibly to be offered as a sacrifice to the wood-gods of the neighbourhood, did the trick, and I soon had a strong party on my side.



I then sent my *saluams* to the opposing party with a message that we would deal with any one who would presume to interfere with us or our plans, and that in the event of even passive resistance, I would honour them with the pleasure of our presence for months to come, instead of days, until we succeeded in killing this tiger, to kill whom I had had the special instructions of the chief official authority of the District, and that in the meanwhile both I and my men would make it a special point of impressing this fact on certain parties.



This apparently settled the matter, for after this I observed no further indications.

As for the tiger. I of course knew it was of no use whatever to tie out any kind of kill, which would be more likely to make him suspicious, and perhaps leave the jungles altogether. So there was nothing for it but to try and work on his known proclivity for cattle-lifting. So for days I loafed about the most likely portions of the jungles in company with a herd of cattle, in the hopes that he might kill one of them as usual; while every evening I had the cattle always driven to a certain jungle pool, for such a practice when carried out regularly is a great and certain attraction to the feline of the neighbourhood, who in their night-wanderings, scent out what has occurred and guess instinctively that the cattle will probably come there to drink on the following evening also.

On the evening of the sixth day of these tactics, one of the men came running to say that he had taken the cattle as usual to the pool to drink, and as they were leaving it, the tiger rushed out and caught one of the cows that had lagged behind, and had carried it bodily off into the jungles.

This was good news, but it was too late to do anything then, for I am not a believer in sitting up at night when the matter is serious. But delay was risky, so I was obliged to place a number of pickets round this block of jungles in order to guard it against being disturbed by any of those who were anxious to frustrate our plans.

In the meanwhile I sent out to the surrounding villages for 100 men to be collected at my camp overnight, and having made all my arrangements, I retired to bed early.

Next morning I found the necessary number of men collected, and great enthusiasm prevailed, for in view of the various acts of sacrifice, etc., with which the jungle deities had been propitiated (at my expense), my men were fully confident now of success.

The whole of the country round about was very hilly, but where the kill had taken place was a level piece of country where the jungle was excessively dense and heavy, knowing which I had ordered a hundred men to be collected, for I did not consider I could work it with less.

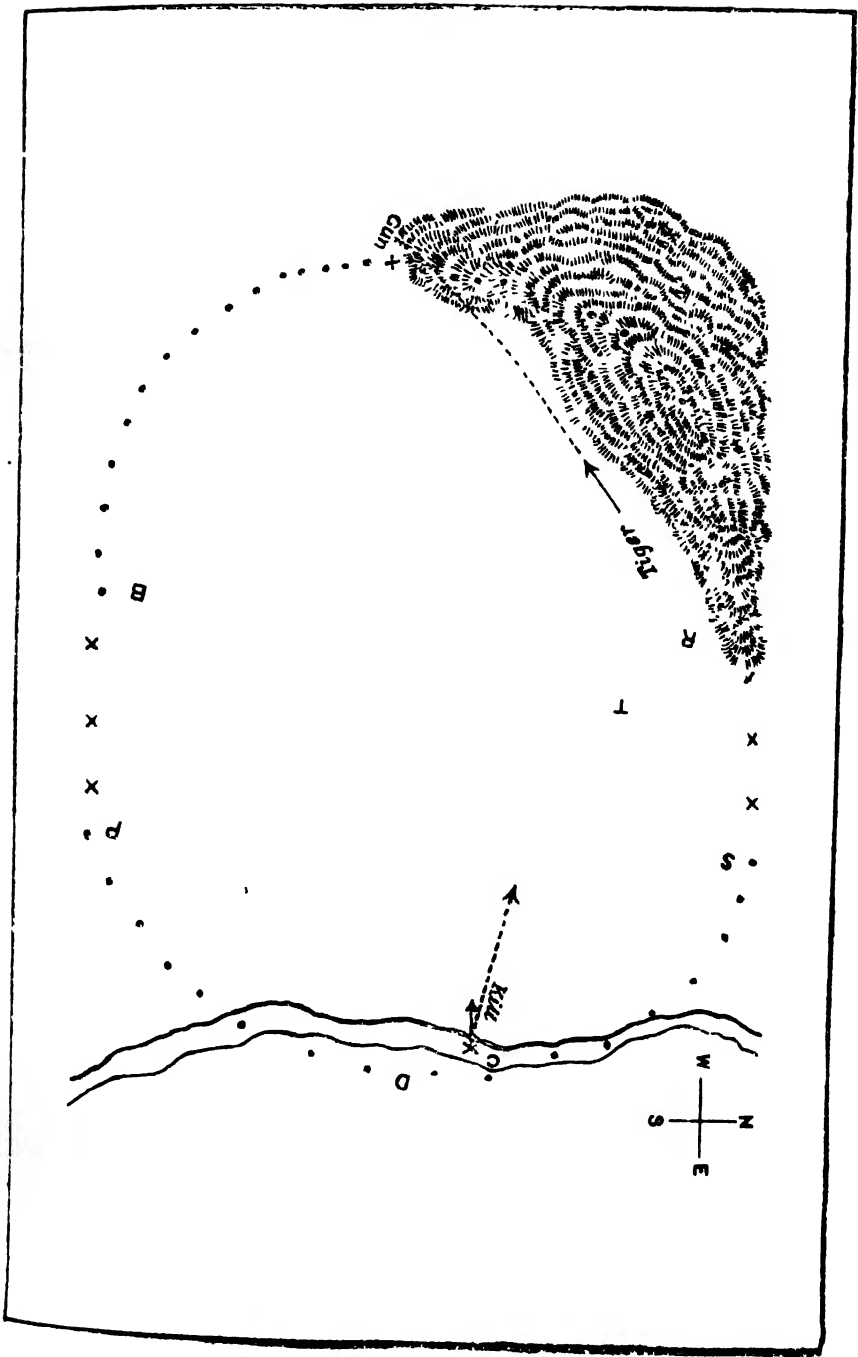
On arriving at the scene of the kill by the pool of water (C), I found that the tiger had taken the cow off towards the west, into a very dense bit of grass jungle, towards a low ridge of rising ground which lay about a mile away. Except for this little ridge, the piece of country around the scene of the kill was a dead level, and the dense grass jungles were excessively heavy in every direction; so to all intents and purposes, it was a matter of indifference as to the direction in which the tiger should be driven, for water was not scarce. The only circumstance that somewhat restricted the movements of the tiger was that all the deciduous trees, except a certain few species, were now entirely bare of leaf.

Under these circumstances I at once directed my attention to the rising ground to the west, and made minute enquiries from local men whether or not there were any trees in leaf on the top of this ridge, for if there were I knew the tiger at this time of the year would for a certainty be under them.

However, I was positively assured that there was no such tree-shade whatever on the top of this ridge, which, on personal examination, I found to be correct. So in all probability the tiger would remain during the day in the shade afforded by the tall grass in the neighbourhood of his kill, though, it being yet early in the morning, he might be lying temporarily on the south-eastern slope of the ridge, so that it was necessary to enclose at least this portion of the ridge within the line of stops, though this would make the beat somewhat a long one.

However, I had an ample amount of men, so after doing some preliminary tracking along the surrounding pathways and nalla beds to see if there were any tracks which might show if the tiger by any chance had gone out of this bit of jungle, I selected a post for myself at the south-east termination of the ridge ('at "Gun").

I then in person put up the stops along the crest of the ridge along the north, and having sent off one of my own men to put up the remainder or intermediate stops, and to line out his half of the beat, I returned, checking the stops I had already posted, and put up the right-wing stops in a similar way, and sent the remaining shikari to line out the remainder of the beaters and to bring up the beat in the proper direction, for both he and the local man with





him now knew exactly where I was posted, so that there could be no mistake as sometimes occurs when such arrangements are omitted.

In the meanwhile there had been plenty of indications that the tiger was within the circle of our beat, and, what was more, he was apparently on the move, so that perhaps we had been only just in time to tie him in, these indications being the numerous calls of wild animals, with whom this bit of jungle appeared to be particularly well stocked.

It is a curious fact, which I have frequently noticed, that wild animals appear soon to differentiate between a fat and lazy old cattle-lifting tiger that is comparatively harmless as far as they themselves are concerned, and a lithe and active game-killing tiger whose creeping presence in their neighbourhood they dread. A cattle-lifter they do not appear to mind one little bit, but seem rather to enjoy mobbing him in turn all over the jungles; but when an active game-killer has been in a certain bit of jungle for two or three days, it will often be found that that jungle is as silent and deserted, as far as four-footed animals are concerned, as if a pack of jungle-dogs had been at work in it for a week.

In the present case I could follow the movements of the old tiger all over the area of the beat. While the men who had been watching this bit of jungle since the evening previous were also able to give me a detailed account of all his movements by the same means.

In about an hour's time the beat commenced, and the direction, from whence human sounds came, told me that the tiger had been well enclosed by the stops and beaters, so that, barring accidents, the old gentleman was now as good as dead.

To my left front, below the ridge about eight hundred yards away, on the top of a very tall and bare *sembul* tree (T) I could see a large male langoor monkey seize a branch with both hands as he peered down below him and shake it, apparently in a great rage as he uttered his hoarse coughing bark, which in sound resembles *cough! cough! cough-o-cough!* showing clearly that a feline was below him. After this the tiger apparently moved straight across the middle of the beat to the south; but later on, again returned to the base of the ridge.

All was then quiet for some time, when suddenly a colony of rat-birds commenced mobbing something to my left on the hillside which I felt certain must be the tiger, whom I had no doubt the stops in that direction would soon turn in my direction.

All was silent again, and the beat continued to advance steadily, until they were at last within almost fifty yards of my position, but no tiger appeared.

I was considerably annoyed, for I was now certain that something had occurred on my left, and that one of the stops in that direction had deliberately let the tiger through.

I was on the point of proceeding to get down from my ladder in order to investigate the matter, when suddenly, on the hillside immediately in my rear, a couple of magpies who had hitherto been hopping about near me unconcernedly, suddenly commenced an ear-splitting chatter of alarm, which made me literally jump on my ladder as I sprang round, for I well knew what it meant, and there, on the hillside on the same level as myself, scarcely twenty feet off, was one of the largest male tigers that it has ever been my lot to see.

The suddenness of my action, and at such close quarters, apparently took the old gentleman by surprise and scared him so much that in his panic, instead of bolting, he crouched to the ground and put back his ears and lips with a snarl, gathering his feet under him with a kind of twitching motion in every muscle over his huge frame, evidently deeming it advisable under the circumstances of striking the first blow. He would undoubtedly have boned me out of my ladder, had I not anticipated his action by firing into him in the nick of time, firing both barrels at once, but not before he had already launched himself into the air in my direction. Owing to his having moved, my bullets, intended for his head, struck him further back between the shoulders. The next moment my ladder was struck violently to one side at the base, and the wounded tiger went hurling down the hillside and out of sight into the grass beyond.

Fortunately my ladder had been firmly tied at the top end, so that though the base end was sent flying to one side, I was yet able to cling to my perch, though the shock very nearly sent me flying also through the air.

The tiger had given a tremendous roar as he sprang in my direction but after striking my ladder he never uttered a sound as he went on, so he had either received a death-blow or had been missed clean, though I could not conceive the possibility of the latter occurring at such a close range, for I had been perfectly cool throughout.

While I was debating the question, my orderly, whom I had placed in a tree some two hundred yards in my rear, called out gloefully that the tiger had fallen over stone dead in the open within forty yards of his tree, and that he could see him clearly as he spoke.

This was good news, so as soon as the beaters were up, I descended my battered ladder as best I could and hurried to the spot, and, sure enough, there was the old veteran whom the villagers assured me they had known for forty years lying quite dead, one of my bullets, as we found later, having shattered his heart.

As for the size of this tiger, the following measurements from my diary of that time will speak for themselves:—

1. Girth round the body—75".
2. Length from nose to root of tail—6' 11".
3. Length of tail—2' 10".
4. Total length (before skinning)—9' 9".
5. Height at shoulder—48".
6. Girth round the head—37".
7. Girth round the neck—36".
8. Girth of wrist—13½".
9. Girth of upper arm—26".
10. Girth of fore-arm—19½".

This is the largest tiger shot by me of which I have any written record, though perhaps in my younger and more careless days, when I failed to make any such records, I may have shot a few as large or even a bit, but not much, larger than this one.

The tiger shot by my son at Khara in the Saharanpur District in 1904 was 1½ inches longer in the body, and 2 inches longer in the tail; but if these measurements are compared with those given in the Khara chapter, it will be found that this Ghogri tiger is much the heavier all round—some 600 lbs. I calculated. I cannot account for the head of this tiger being apparently smaller than that of the Khara tiger; but such are the measurements in my diary. I am sorry I made no note of girth of his forefoot, which I

think would probably be something like 18 inches against 12 inches of the Khara tiger's foot.

I gave the men the wherewithal to make merry that night, and with which to feed and propitiate their jungle deities with thanksgivings to their hearts' content.

This tiger, I am convinced, would never have sprung at me in the manner he did, had he not been taken so utterly by surprise, and he did so simply in a panic, not having time in which to think of any other plan with which to ward off the blow which his instinct told him was coming.

On the *shoulder* of this tiger there was a mark of an old wound, and on skinning him we found, embedded in a kind of a sack in the under-portion of his *neck*, a 10-bore *conical* bullet, which had apparently been deflected by the *muscles only* of the shoulder in consequence of which it had merely run round on the outside, to the spot where we found it, instead of smashing through the muscles, shoulder-blade, and the vitals beyond, as it would have done had it been a spherical ball instead of a conical. So much for *conical* bullets! On enquiry, I learnt that this bullet had been fired at this tiger two years before by Mr. T., the late Deputy Commissioner of Chindwara.

This popular officer was the life of every community that had the good fortune of his company, and there are many good yarns told of him. On one occasion he received intimation that the Chief Commissioner on a certain date would visit and inspect his district, in consequence of which he was instructed to "have *everything* gloaned up and white-washed." These instructions were obeyed literally—very; but to start with: on the arrival of the Chief Commissioner at the railway station, Mr. T. worked manfully in personally conveying His Honour's personal effects to the carriage that was awaiting him, and just as the cavalcade was about to start, Mr. T. rushed in breathless haste in time to throw into the carriage as it was starting, what he affected to believe to be a part of His Honour's personal belongings—consisting of a dirty bundle of rags with a "lota" and rope attached, which he had snatched from a passing native—apologizing with a grave countenance, when reproved, for having made such a "mistake"! But this was not all: for as the



party drove from the station to Head-quarters, on all sides their astounded gaze met nothing but "white-wash"—all the trees, bushes and even stones that they passed were all "white-washed"—some ekkas drove ostentatiously by, and they, their ponies and even drivers were all beautifully "white-washed!" The orders had been obeyed! while at the jail, the cemetery and the lunatic asylum they were met with the word "Welcome!" inscribed in large letters over the gates.

### CHAPTER III.

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#### HOW I GOT MY FIRST TIGER—(CHERAPATLA).

In the year 1866, when I had only been a few weeks in the country, my Chief deputed me to report on certain matters in connection with a local dispute regarding some forests in the neighbourhood of a little jungle village called Cherapatla, in the Baitool District, regardless of the fact that I was totally ignorant of the language, the natives of the country, or the proper modes of camp life; such was the way in which we worked in those by-gone days. I was therefore not sorry to find on my arrival at Cherapatla that the Commissioner, Sir M. L., and the Police Officer of the District, were also camped there, for I hoped I might pick up a few wrinkles from these older hands as to the proper way in which to set about in these wild lands.

A few days before my arrival here a large male tiger had killed the blacksmith of the village, so I found that the Police Officer was dutifully conducting a *bundobast*, by means of which it was hoped that the fell feline would be conducted before the "Lord o' The Land" to be shot. Being anxious to learn in everything, I accompanied them, but did not take my gun and watched the progress of the arrangements very carefully.

However, in spite of all each and every beat turned out blank; and after several days of futile beating the chase was relinquished, and the Police Officer was sent on ahead with the camp to another part of the district; while the "Lord o' The Land" honoured me with his company at breakfast and coached my young idea in regard to the *proper* way to shoot tigers successfully.

However, all I learnt was of a negative quality, for I learned several things that I ought *not* to do, and among them not to trust native shikaris with the work of putting out stops, but to do this important work myself.

The land being clear, I then set about seeing what I could do by my own little lone. But here again my simple trustful nature received another rude shock.

I sent out men to tie out buffs to provide free dinners for the lord of the forests, I mean the tiger of course, not the other lord who had gone. In due course one morning a grinning native turned up, and after cackinnating vigorously for some time, succeeded in making me understand that the tiger had killed one of my buffs. (Good old tiger; with the usual ardour of youth I counted him as good as dead, and pictured what his huge skin would look like pegged out on the ground.

I sent off my old one-eyed jamadar to collect coolies and started off in high spirits to inspect the kill. However on the way I was met by the gallant jamadar who had preceded me, and very pale and trembling he was. He had met the tiger in the nalla, he said, and only just saved his life by getting up a tree in the nick of time, as the tiger rushed at him; at least this was what I gathered; but these were all fairy tales, for there were no tiger's footmarks in the nalla, the truth being the man was afraid of going through these forests alone, and not unnaturally, for this tiger had killed a man only a few days before.

On reaching the kill, what was my disappointment but to see the dead buff still at his post, tied with—of all things—a *bambu rope*, which even an elephant would have failed to break. There being no drag, nor footmarks to go by, I had not the foggiest notion as to the direction in which the tiger had gone—whether north, south, east or west. So I was obliged to relinquish my intention of beating for the tiger that day; and having had the remains of the dead buff removed I had another buff brought up, and this I tied myself with a rope that the tiger *could* break.

As I was pretty certain of getting another kill that night, I had men collected overnight; and in the morning it was reported to me that the tiger had killed my buff, and having broken the rope, had dragged the remains away into the jungle. Everything being in readiness, we started off at once.

Having already been over the ground several times, I was well acquainted with it, so I made up my mind as to the direction in which the beat should proceed, even before I inspected the direction of the drag, which the shikari assured me was to the north of the river-bed. So halting the beaters in the jungles at a spot (b) about a

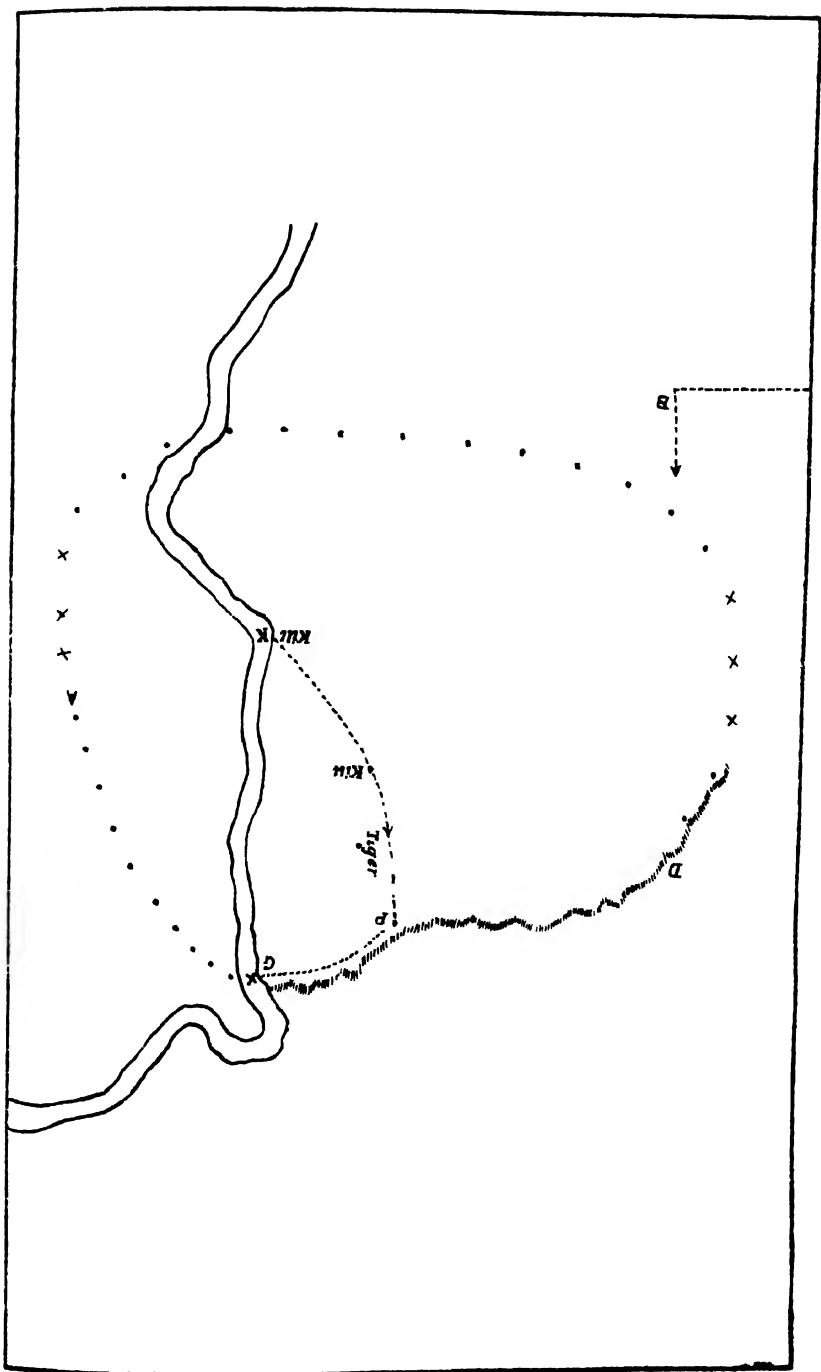
mile from the kill, I struck off at right angles to the left with my stops, heading for a small ridge (d), along which I then placed my right-wing stops as I went. Selecting a tree (g) for my shooting ladder below the ridge, where the latter intersected the river-bed, I proceeded to put out my left-wing stops, extending them to a point (a) about 700 yards higher up the river, and from thence I sent on my shikari to line out the beaters and bring up the beat, while I myself went to inspect the drag and to take up my position on my ladder.

My reason for hurrying on matters in this manner was that from my previous observations of the habits of this animal, I was convinced that this tiger was a very wary one, having been beaten several times, and in consequence was in the habit of deserting the neighbourhood of his kill fairly early in the day and thus avoiding the midday disturbance which his past experience told him would be surely followed on having partaken of the sportsman's hospitality. My idea was to ring him in before he made his customary escape to some more distant jungle; and in this I succeeded.

Having sent off the shikari to perform his portion of the work, I quietly proceeded down the dry sandy bed of the river until I reached the spot (k) where I had tied out the buff on the evening previous. Here I found a pool of blood, the frayed end of the broken rope still attached to the stump, and a broad drag in the sand leading into the jungle towards the very centre of the beat; so I was in luck's way.

The footmarks by the drag were those of an enormous old male tiger which I had no difficulty in recognizing, for there was only one such in these jungles.

Here my inexperience permitted me to commit the mistake of needlessly following up the drag. It was yet scarcely 8 o'clock, and the dense jungle was sodden with dew as I cautiously pushed forward along the track, peering carefully ahead expecting to see the tiger at any moment. I had proceeded about four hundred yards in this manner, when I noticed a number of vultures and crows seated on some trees ahead of me, and as I drew near, they flew down to the ground. Had I had more experience, the fact that they were not already down should have warned me that the tiger was *with* his kill, and the fact that they flew down on my approach showed that he had heard me and had only just moved off.



GURUPATLA







MY FIRST TIGER.







On the horns of the dead buff, which now came into sight, were a couple of mynas busily engaged in picking off the ticks in his ears, while the ugly bald-headed vultures were having a hasty scramble for a meal in his inside before I arrived to drive them off. I was still gazing at the handiwork of the monster when suddenly some of the right-wing stops along the crest (p) of the ridge began to tap their trees sharply, and I realized that I had disturbed the tiger who in consequence was trying to make his escape. So I legged it as fast as I could in the direction where my ladder had been placed, fearing I might be too late.

Nor were my fears groundless, for as I neared my post at a run down the sandy bed of the river, I suddenly spotted the tiger coming down the side of the hill at a fast crouching walk. He had not seen me, so I dropped to my knee—not daring to move further for fear the tiger would see me and sheer off.

Without hesitation he sprang into the bed of the river broad-side on to me, scarcely fifteen feet away. I immediately fired into the brown, and at the same time dashed into the cover on the river-bank, from whence I commenced to pump lead into the tiger who was rolling about in the bed of the river below me, kicking up a most appalling shindy, as he savagely broke his teeth on a large stone which he had taken between his paws in his rage. From first to last, this beast, never saw me, which was lucky, for my first position when I fired was a completely exposed one. I soon silenced him, and there before me, lying stone dead, was my “first tiger,” a monster too, measuring nine feet eight inches.

I had lately bought, on behalf of Government, an elephant called Bag Bahadur, and as I had been given the use of this animal, I had him brought up to see how he would behave. I soon regretted it, for this was my own precious “first tiger,” on seeing which the elephant immediately rushed at it, first trying to impale it with his enormous tusks, and then getting it between his legs, dashed it backwards and forwards rapidly, and finally, giving it one tremendous kick with his hind leg, sent it flying up the river bank.

In the meanwhile I was doing a war dance round the elephant in my frantic endeavours to rescue the remains of my precious tiger. It was a lesson to me, not to in future set an elephant on to a dead

tiger if I wished to preserve the skin. However, we managed to get the enraged beast off in time to save the skin from much damage, though many of the bones of the tiger were smashed to a pulp.

I was a proud lad that evening as I wrote to my old father in England, telling him of the manner in which I got my "first tiger."



## CHAPTER IV.

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### 150 EXPRESS RILL'S EXPLOIT.

Forest Block No. 15 in the northern portion of the Jubbulpore District did not usually hold tigers, when, on the 5th of January 1894, while camped at Piparia, news was brought in to me that two tigers had taken up their quarters in it, for I had to inspect this block and had not anticipated any sport here.

I was pleased, because even in my own forests my opportunities for big-game sport was considerably circumscribed on account of the large number of shooting-passes that I had issued to other sportsmen in these forests—in consequence of which I was compelled to seek my own game more or less in the bye-ways and hedges, as it were—in places not already monopolized by pass-holders, and I had not anticipated a chance at a tiger until I came round to Block No. 13 at Umareea, which was then vacant.

Block No. 15 was not very promising, for it contained no regular supply of water, except a few and far between pools of catchment water in the otherwise dry water-courses resulting from the late winter showers of rain. That there might be such pools of water was merely a guess of mine at the time being, which subsequently proved correct.

This block was a dead-level throughout, except perhaps for a slight rise in the ground here and there, round which the dry water-courses wound their way, and being still early in the year, the cover was comparatively heavy. So I had practically no natural features of country to aid me in beating out these tigers.

I therefore ordered a full complement of one hundred men to be collected when I sent my buffs to be tied out.

In the meanwhile I sent my camp on to Koonwan, so that I could work Jhiria, or No. 15 Block, on my way.

On the morning of the 10th of January a kill was duly reported, and my camp having already been sent on overnight to Koonwan, I and my men started to follow it *via* Jhiria.

We found that the kill had taken place at (a) the junction of two fire-lines, near a pool of water in an otherwise dry water-course, and the remains of the buff had been dragged towards the north.

On examining my large scale map, I found that a smaller water-course, about half a mile to the north ran parallel to the one near which the kill had taken place. So I at once circled round to the west and then northwards, and found that the tiger—for there was only one, instead of two tigers as reported—had apparently not gone out anywhere.

The northern water-course bent round a piece of slightly rising ground, so I at once took advantage of this natural configuration, slight as it was, and selected a post (x Gun) on its shoulder near a bend in the water-course, and here put up my ladder.

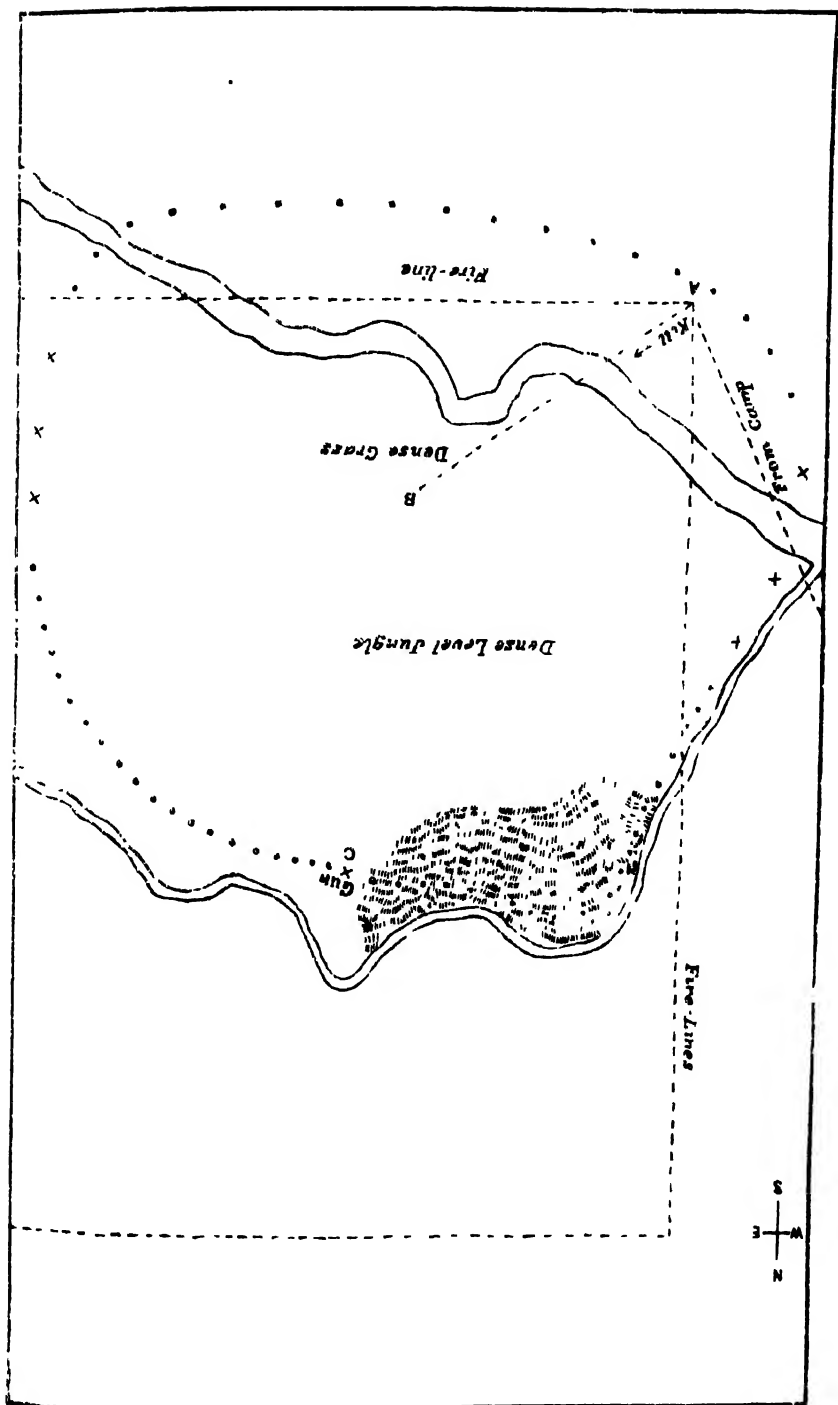
The cover was very heavy, so I used 60 of the hundred men as stops, leaving only 10 to act as beaters. But all my men were well trained, and all the arrangements went like clock-work, very rapidly and without any fuss or noise.

Having put up all stops, and sent off my men to bring up the boat, I climbed into my ladder and—the wind being favourable—lit my pipe while I waited events.

In due time the beat started, and in a very short time I saw a male tiger heading quietly straight towards me.

I had lately been doing some very accurate shooting with my little .450 Express rifle on black buck, so though I might easily have obtained a close shot at perhaps ten yards' distance, I was tempted to take a comparatively long shot at about seventy yards at the white chest of the tiger as he paused for a moment on a bank in front of me.

I believe I would have hit a sixpenny bit with that shot, for,







throat, bringing him with a sobbing grunt on to his knees, from whence he never moved again.

The whole matter was over in a few minutes from the commencement of the beat, for the lady—the tigress—was not at home this time, perhaps fortunately for her.

When the beaters arrived, I got down from my tree and measured him as he lay—9 feet 4 inches—as noted in my diary.

I then sent the beast off to camp with a note of “all’s well” to my wife, and proceeded well pleased with the world in general to investigate the contents of my tiffin-basket, and afterwards to inspect the forests.

Thinking I had done well enough for one day, I was not very keen about the tigress, so—somewhat to my shikari’s disgust—I dismissed most of the beaters.

But such are the very occasions that fortune is most apt to thrust her favours on one, quite unsought.

The afternoon was well advanced, and just as we were thinking of relinquishing our inspections and wending our way camp-wards, a grain-carrier ran up in breathless haste to report that the tigress had just killed his bullock within about half a mile of the spot where we stood.

I had now only about twenty men left with me, and an old elephant that had been borrowed from the native zamindar of Umarcea. However, the opportunity was too good to be lost, so away we started to see what we could do.

On arriving at the scene, we found that the bullock had been killed on a forest road, and the carcass dragged into a comparatively isolated bit of cover, which under the circumstances was a great bit of luck.

Fearing the tigress might become aware of our presence and clear off, I took six men, and telling the remainder to give us a quarter of an hour’s law and then to beat up in line towards the west, I hurried round to do the best we could.

Placing three men up trees at intervals of about a hundred yards apart as I proceeded, I selected a post for myself, and then lined out the remaining three men in a similar manner on the further side of me. This we did at a run.

I was on the point of reaching the tree into which I intended to climb myself, when suddenly a barking-deer gave an appalling yell almost into my ear as it seemed. Only those who have heard the call of a barking-deer at the distance of, say, ten feet, will understand me when I say that this sudden yell is even more startling than the roar of a tiger, so that I literally jumped back a pace. But the next moment it flashed across my mind that it was not I who had so alarmed the deer, but something else—something that I was hoping for and awaiting. So instead of climbing into my tree—to do which I now realised I was too late—I slipped quietly behind a bush, and waited.

Sure enough, as I had anticipated, there was my lady-stripes coming along at a crouching walk that was half a run, with ears laid back, a very evil-looking vixen indeed.

Her course would take her some thirty yards to my right, so I waited for her to come level with me. The Sal saplings here grew very thickly, making it very difficult to get a clear shot, and, to make matters worse, she suddenly began to canter.

How I wished I had not been such a fool as to give up my old smooth-bore for the .450 Express rifle which I now hold in my hands, which—to make matters worse—was loaded in both barrels with explosive bullets, which I knew would explode in the air if they met with the smallest twig on the way.

However, in another moment she would be out of sight, so I was obliged to fire at her through the saplings, which were now flashing by her like the spokes of a wheel.

As was to be expected, my first bullet never reached her at all, having exploded on a twig, through which a solid spherical ball would have gone with ease into the tigress beyond. But my second bullet caught her fair and square on her shoulder, and knocked her over; but she regained her feet, and commenced to spin round and round roaring and biting at her shoulder, which I could see was broken and contained a huge external wound into which I could have got both my fists.

In the meanwhile I was making frantic haste to reload my empty rifle, but before I succeeded in doing so, the tigress gave a bound, and was out of sight, fortunately not having seen me, for I would have been at her mercy.

I then quickly called up the elephant, and having mounted it, quickly gave chase, forbidding any men to follow us on foot.

At first there were great quantities of blood, which appeared as if it had been poured out of a bucket; but after a time the blood-trail became less and less, until at last, in the failing light, we could no longer keep on the trail from on top of the elephant, and were finally obliged to give up the chase for that day, marking the place where the blood trail had crossed our road which led towards our camp.

On sending back for the men who were awaiting us, I learnt that a number of them had already preceded us to camp, on hearing which, the idea flashed across me of the possibility of some of these men having come across the wounded tigress as she crossed the road. But I dismissed the idea as being unlikely, and proceeded on our way towards camp.

On arrival at the village, what was my disgust but to find a pandemonium of wailing going on among the women, the meaning of which I at once guessed—what very bad luck.

As I expected, one of the wretches who had disobeyed my expressed orders, had met the wounded tigress as she crossed the road, and had been mauled by her in consequence. However, he was not so bad but that he was able to run all the way back to his home, having been bitten only through the arm, and with a few other minor scratches. I nevertheless treated him at once with carbolic, and insisted on him going to hospital. But though this man's wounds were comparatively slight, he nevertheless died a few days later, purely from shock. And I had the felicity of providing for his wife and family, owing to his own carelessness and disobedience of orders.

I again hunted for this tigress the whole of the next day, but I never saw nor heard of her again. I suppose she died somewhere, which I am afraid was very little consolation to me.

On the 20th January 1894 I met Mr. Scott, the Settlement Officer, and with him inspected the ryotwari village of Umarpani; but he unfortunately could not stay with me to take part in a beat which I had arranged on the following day in Block No. 18, for duty called him elsewhere.

Block No. 13 was a somewhat difficult bit of cover to work, so I ordered a hundred men to be collected overnight.

Next morning a kill was reported about three miles from camp. This beat was as carefully arranged, and was as successful as the first beat on the 10th. But I took good care to use my smooth-bore this time, and allowed the tiger to approach within 20 yards, where I dropped him on his knees with a neck shot in exactly the same manner as the other tiger. This tiger, a male, also measured exactly 9 feet 4 inches.

The accuracy of that little .450 Express rifle seemed to have a peculiar fascination over me, for in the diary of the same year, on the 30th December 1894, I see the entry: "had a *hank* (a beat) at Jhooli; the tiger came out in the beat, 25 yards off, and the Express shell broke up on the shoulder but did not enter." So much for Express bullets!

In 1890 I was mauled with this weapon in my hands; and with it in 1891 a tiger escaped with only a broken shoulder; twice in 1894, as above, did the same thing happen; and it happened again in December 1895. It was only after this fifth fiasco that I sold it to a friend who was very anxious to have it.

This is the worst part of possessing an accurate small-bore weapon, that one is so often very sorely tempted to use it against one's better judgment.







(1) *C. tle*      (2) *Bu al*      (3) *Bk*      |      (4) *il*      4

## CHAPTER V

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### MAN-EATING TICKLESS ON THE PRANHITA RIVER

Of my diaries for the period during which I was in Chiricahua, namely, of the years 1869-70 and 1871, I can find only a few muchattered and insect-eaten pages of the year 1871, of the months of May and June only, though these also contain a note of the measurements of a bull bison shot by me in the month previous in April.

However, the few pages that remain, afford some of the details mentioned in this chapter, and also of the chapter given elsewhere under the title of "A Buffalo Hunt on the Pranhita River." Such as they are, I will give a few of the details from the above-mentioned pages of the diary —

*Thursday, 4th May 1871* — Camp Allapilli. Went after a buff, saw him twice but did not get a shot.

*5th May.*—The Patel of village Moongera came and said he saw 4 buffs and 3 bears on the way, drinking water near Moongera.

*7th May.*—Bunroo (my shikari) says he saw a tiger drinking at the little "jheera" on the other side of the village.

*8th May.*—Despatched my Report, which has been delayed because of the Sironcha accounts. Off to Moongera to-morrow.

*9th May.*—Camp Moongera. Found 5 buffs and about 8 bison had drunk at the Goodalmargu water.

*10th May.*—(Diary eaten out by insects.)

*11th May.*—Wounded two bison, broke the shoulder of one and sent a bullet slap through the other.

*12th May.*—Shot a big bull buff. Fearfully hot.

*15th May.*—The Daroga came to see me and reports all well in his sub-division. Shikari came across one of my wounded bison, did not get him.

*16th May.*—Shot a bison.

*18th May.*—Marched to Allapilli. Starting off my carts for Chandra.

*20th May.*—Marched to Mahagaon. Daroga and carts remain at Ahiri.

*21st May.*—Marched to Bhori. Found two tigers' prints on the road.

*22nd May.*—No kill. Gunga Singh arrived. I am not well, bad with dysentery. Marched to Macheeghatta.

*23rd May.*—Tied out buffs for the man-eating tigress. Heard from Herbert, my brother.

*Wednesday, 24th May.*—(My birthday). A kill. After a long hunt shot the tigress, which charged the elephant. Length 9 feet, a very fine one though old. For four years on my birthday, either on the 23rd or 24th I have killed a tiger. Heard of a man-killing buff here, his tracks are enormous, will try for him to-morrow.

*25th May.*—About 10 o'clock my shikari Bunroo came in and said that the buffalo had been seen about two miles down the river, so off we started in boats. Got him after a long and exciting chase, took twelve bullets to kill him (the remainder of this page also is destroyed).

I am very vexed that this diary is not complete, especially that of the 25th of May, for I remember I put down in detail all the



dimensions of this buff, which was an enormous beast. However, the account regarding the latter is given at length in the next chapter. In the present chapter I will deal with the case of the man-eating tigress.

There are hundreds—I might say thousands—of places among the many thousands of square miles of forests that cover large tracts of India, where quite unknown to the outside world the human inhabitants suffer terribly from the depredations of habitual man-killers of various kinds. In this category are sometimes wild boars, neilgai, bears, buffaloes, and, worst of all, man-killing panthers and tigers.

But so imbued are the benighted victims of these depredations, with fatalism, that they generally make no effort at all on their own initiative to rid themselves of these scourges. In fact they often go to the other extreme, and having invested the object of their dread with supernatural attributes, try to propitiate it with prayers and offerings, and in such cases generally do all they can to conceal the beast's existence from any sportsman that may happen at any time to come to the neighbourhood, thinking thereby to earn the gratitude of their pampered "demon." This is most of all true of the inhabitants that are of aboriginal origin, as they mostly are in jungle tracts.

Such was the case of a man-eating tigress that had become the scourge of the country at the time I am speaking of, along the Pranhita river between the small villages of Bhori and Machee-ghatta, not far from the junction of the four forest rivers, the Waingunga, the Wurdah, the Munna, and the Andheri, which go to make up the beautiful conflux known as the Pranhita.

With her head-quarters among the rocky *jammun*-covered islands of the Pranhita, the tigress levied a blood-thirsty toll on the unfortunate inhabitants of the country, as well as doing great damage among their cattle, frequently killing five and six animals at a time out of pure vindictiveness, with the result that she came to be looked upon by the simple jungle folk as an angry "demon" that needed propitiation.

In the year 1870 she killed an European Survey Officer, and as I was also stationed in the district at the time, the fact of the existence of this fiend came to my notice.

I repeatedly tried, without success, for this beast while on my various trips to the Ahiri Forests. I was now returning to Chanda for the last time, after a solid period of eight months' hardships in those primeval forests, which I had been deputed to select and demarcate. My orders were to report on the number, girth and species of every tree over a certain girth that were in the forests selected by me. This was terrible hard work, for it entailed the checking of millions of such trees by myself and my establishment. From sunrise to sundown, for weeks and months on end, we would be at it, beating backwards and forwards in a line consisting of about forty men, with myself, Rangers and Foresters at intervals along the line noting down the details called out by the men on either side of us, who tapped the trees with the backs of their axes calling out *bole* (solid) or *pokal* (hollow) as the case might be. That which caused us the greatest distress was the *kamach* or cow-itch which hung in great pods overhead and shook down its minute spines in showers on to us as we passed below, entering the pores of our skin and almost maddened us. There were of course no roads of any kind and we had simply to push our way through the tangled mass of *kamach* and spear-grass, etc., as best we could, and having thus selected and checked a suitable area, we had to cut a demarcation line round it in the form of a quadrangle, and then proceed over another area in a similar manner. Hornets' nests were another dread against which we had constantly to be on guard, big black brutes some four inches in length with a sting like a bradawl, three of whom have been known to kill a man. They build a nest which looks like a large football about five feet in diameter, on the branch of a tree. Fortunately there were a great number of bears in this part of the country, so the large bees invariably had their combs very high up on the top of the tallest trees where there was little chance of their being disturbed by us, but not so in the case of the hornets. On one occasion we were obliged to set fire to the jungles in order to save our lives from the hornets. I give the above short sketch of some of the difficulties with which we had to contend, to show that a Forest Officer's life at times is not all skittles.

The neighbourhood of the little fishing village of Bhuri was the head-quarters of both the man-killers, the tigress and the bull, though

I did not learn of even the existence of this bull till after I had killed the tigress.

I arrived at Bhori on the 21st of May, but though there were two tigers there, the tigress that I was after in particular was not among them, being reported to be higher up the river, attending to the cattle belonging to a *tunda* of Brinjaras (or Banjaras) who were camped there at the time. So the next day I marched on to the next little village on the banks of the river named Macheeghatta. Here a deputation of Brinjara naicks or headmen awaited me. These Brinjaras are the sole carriers in these vast jungle tracts where there are no roads of any description, transporting such necessary commodities as grain, salt, etc., on pack bullocks, who are not led by the men but follow a trained leader wearing a bell. The Brinjaras rendered valuable service to the British armies during the Indian Mutiny, and earlier still during the Mahratta wars, being used of course by both sides, as in fact they were the only means of transport in some of these regions.

During their off-season in the rains, they congregate in favourite jungle resorts where good grazing may be had for their vast herds of cattle. Their women are extremely good-looking and are generally loaded with heavy ornaments of pure silver, while the men are equally well favoured, much taller and better built than the ordinary native; very quick tempered and vengeful, these jovial bearded ruffians delight in crime, but only where they can do so with impunity. After the rains they split up into family parties or *tandas* under a patriarchal form of self-government, and wander over the face of the earth—true Ishmaelites—their hand against every man and every man's hand against them.

These Brinjaras now form one of the recognized tribes of wandering Ishmaelites of India on whom the police have to keep a careful eye; but originally, after the Aryan invasion of India (for they are distinctly of Aryan origin, being generally fair with strong clear-cut features), they were probably the travelling merchant explorers, the prototypes on the land of the ancient Venetians and Carthaginians, though of an earlier date.

That they have survived so many centuries of strife and still maintain strongly their individuality as a distinct tribe, speaks for

their physical hardihood and determination of character. But the Brinjara as he has been, and is still now, though in a lesser degree, will soon be a thing of the past, for a network of railways is spreading over India in every direction and is fast usurping the only legitimate employment of the Brinjara, forcing him to resort more and more every day to the only other occupation he knows. Consequently these tribes will in time be a type—a memory only—of the past. But I am digressing from my story.

A number of Brinjara *tandas* had taken up their quarters in the neighbourhood of Macheeghatta preparatory to the setting in of the rains, and wherever there are large numbers of Brinjara cattle in jungle-tracts, there also are tigers, some of whom will follow a large herd, following along their trail at night, for hundreds of miles, often being led in this manner into comparatively open country; it is thus the cattle-lifting tigers are found sometimes in such extraordinary places.

But it was not of the ordinary tigers that the naicks of the above-mentioned *tandas* had to complain, for these took only one bullock at a time, and that only occasionally; but this tigress killed or maimed five or six at each onslaught, out of pure wantonness, and to make matters a thousand times worse, she had killed and eaten several of their herdsmen.

Being more enlightened than the less travelled inhabitants of the country, they had no scruples in seeking my aid to rid them of this scourge, for these men evidently were in a genuine terror of this man-eater.

The evening previous to my arrival they had placed an effigy of a man on a platform about eight feet from the ground, on the road leading to the *ghat* or watering-place, with the object of frightening this tigress away; but in the morning they found that she had knocked the whole concern down and had torn the effigy to pieces. As the place was not far from my camp I went down to inspect it, and, true enough, there were the footmarks of the tigress, the remains of the tumbled down *mochan*, and pieces of cloth scattered about.

Man-eating tigers are so often represented as being deformed in one foot that I hesitate to mention the fact that this one was afflicted in the same way, her left hind-foot being crooked and malformed.

I found afterwards that this foot had, at some bygone time, been smashed—probably by a bullet. More than this I found afterwards that her teeth were very decayed and broken, and I am convinced that she must have suffered greatly from toothache in consequence which would account for her particularly savage temper.

She had now, during the hot weather, taken up her quarters in and among the *jamun*-covered islands of the Pranhita.

She was also said to live apart from all other tigers (of whom there was said to be a party of five in the neighbourhood), probably because she was passed the age of coquetry, and as she was very regular in her haunts, coupled with the peculiarity of her footmark, it was not a difficult matter to locate her.

Having examined the locality well and found fresh footmarks, I selected a spot (k) on the lower bank, on the further side of the river, about a mile and a half from my camp, and here I tied out a young buffalo.

She had not been hurried by any sportsman for a long time, and was not above killing a juicy young buff, so I was pretty certain I would obtain a kill that night; I therefore made my arrangements accordingly.

The water that surrounded these island was very deep, too deep even in most parts for the poor old blind elephant I had with me this year to ford, so the use of boats and canoes, in order to transport the beaters, was indispensable; and as the villagers who owned them were loath to help, I made arrangements overnight to obtain a number of the *dheemer* class with their canoes and boats in the morning before they left their homes, both at Macheeghatta and Bhori.

This was done, and next morning I found about twenty-five canoes and a few large boats collected by the river bank, with their attendant *dheemers*, while a large number of Brinjara also turned up, some with old matchlock guns, to act as beaters.

The night had been a very sultry one, but a dip in the river greatly refreshed me, and as I was certain that there had been a kill, I did not wait for news to come in, but started off as soon as the men had collected, which was at about 7-30 A.M., quite early enough, for an earlier start might have resulted in the tigress being disturbed before she had time to shake down in her quarters for the day.

Long before reaching the spot where we had tied out the buff on the night previous, I knew that my hopes had been fulfilled, for high up in the sky were a number of black spots wheeling about, some of whom were shooting down one after another with half-closed wings and drooping legs in the direction of the goal for which we were making.

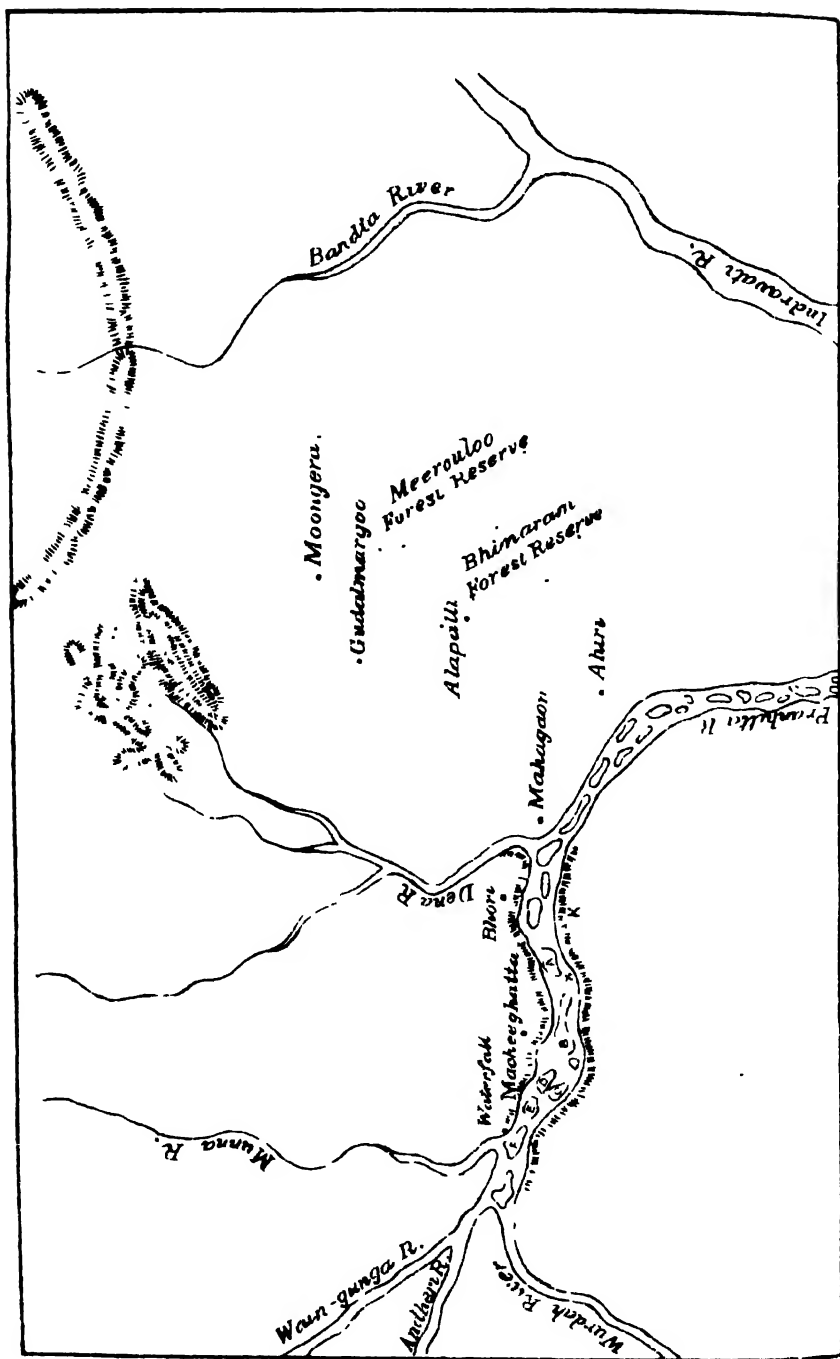
These vultures wheeling in the air, the dark evergreens and rocky banks and island, the tall dank grass and the soft yellow light of the rising sun which suffused the whole of this quiet solitude—all combined to make the aspect of these surroundings a very "tigerish" one.

On reaching the spot we found, as expected, that the buffalo had gone. It was the old lady herself too, for there was the deformed footmark, a pool of blood, and a broad trail of the "drag" in the sand leading up the river.

"It was necessary now to track her in order to ascertain whether she was on the banks of the river, or on the islands. And it was as well we did so, for it proved she had gone much further than I had expected. We found the remains of the half-eaten buff within 200 yards, but from thence her footmarks wandered on, in and out of the grass patches that grew on the sands of the lower or "false" bank of the river, until it finally led down to the water's edge, from whence there was no return track. She had evidently swum across to one of the numerous islands, but whether she had not again swum across to either of the banks was a question that would be settled as the stops on either side were being put out, thus at the same time ringing her in effectually should she be on the islands, which I was almost certain she was. Whereas, if we went on poking about further without first ringing her in, she might become suspicious and make off, and a stern chase after an unwounded tiger is generally a hopeless one.

So I quietly returned to the men, and having divided them into three batches, one batch to act as beaters and the other two as stops, I proceeded to give my instructions. The beaters consisting chiefly of Brinjara's armed with old matchlocks, etc., were to be landed on the islands in the larger boats, and as the tigress was a particularly savage beast, and was expected to fight, I permitted the full use of







fire-arms and drums among the beaters. One lot of stops were to be conducted quietly by an orderly along the further bank of the river, to be posted by him at intervals in the trees on the higher bank, keeping a sharp lookout for any tracks in the sand which might show that the tigress had left the area that was being ringed in; while I myself proceeded in a similar manner on the opposite bank until I finally took up a position about four hundred yards ahead of the spot where the tracks of the tigress led into the water.

On seeing these arrangements, the aborigines became quite converted, and were now eager to join in and help in every way they could, one old fellow with a matchlock volunteering to accompany me as a stop. The *dheemers*, too, in the canoes were as keen as the rest, and were invaluable later on as scouts, in marking and ringing in the tigress when she swam from one island to another.

Having posted all the stops, I proceeded in a boat to ascertain definitely on which island the tigress was, before taking up my position and giving the word for the beat to start. Examination on the further side of the first island (a) entered by her footmarks proved that she had left it and had swum across to the next one (b). As there were no signs of her having left this, I took up my position on the further side (at "g") and placed the old man with the matchlock on a rock which jutted out of the water to my left and told him to try and stop the tigress if she attempted to break away in that direction. Between his position and mine there was only a narrow but deep channel of water that divided this from the next island (c), so I knew the tigress would probably cross here rather than force her way to the mainland.

Everything being ready I signalled to the orderly, who had been watching my movements from the mainland, to return and bring up the beat. This he did, and the beat had been in progress for about quarter of an hour, with much beating of drums and firing of guns when, in spite of these precautions, there was a great roar and the old lady tried to break back through the beaters. But it ended in bluff only, for the Brinjarns stood firm, and the tigress was forced again to move on. She was evidently a very old "bird" and knew the dangers of being "driven."





MAN LAKE TOW HPPN-11E



she went to another (f) near the mainland. It was now evident that she was trying to gain the heavy jungles that lay between the four rivers. My orderly spotted this, and on his own initiative, rushed his stops round on to the further side of the island, and with the help of the *dheemers* in the canoes, prevented her from crossing over to the mainland.

This last island was really a projection of land, over the neck of which the water poured in a perpendicular fall of about twenty feet. Below this fall was the only place where it was shallow enough for the elephant to ford, so crossing at this point, we were poking along under the bank of the island, which was on the same level as our heads, when I suddenly caught sight of the tigress flattened to the ground under a bush, only about ten feet off. I only just had time to fling up my gun and fire as she sprang at the *mahout*, luckily hitting her in the head. Her impetus nevertheless landed her on the elephant's head, which she scratched as she slid back dead into the water. Hearing and feeling the tigress, though she could not see it, the elephant backed quickly into the deep water behind, where the valiant "char-cutter," having armed himself with a spear, jobbed her with it in the leg in his terror, as he clung on, in fear of being either crushed or drowned. So the pandemonium that ensued, coupled with the roar of the falling waters, was something indescribable.

However, we at length again pacified the elephant, who was not much the worse for the encounter, except for a few scratches on her head and on her hind quarters and a spear thrust, which might easily have been worse.

The tigress, having sunk in comparatively shallow water under the shelter of the bank, was soon brought up by the *dheemers*, though some of them suggested that she might still be alive! Securing her with ropes, we floated her down the river until we came opposite the site of my camp, when we landed and pulled her ashore.

She was a very old beast, her markings being more like that of an old male than a female, while her teeth wore all broken and decayed. The *dheemers* were delighted, and it was during my siesta with my pipe in the shade, that they held a *panchayat* (council), at which they decided to seek my aid in ridding them of a solitary wild buffalo which had killed several of their men.

The Brinjaras were equally delighted, but somehow omitted to mention the existence of this buffalo to me ; they probably argued that he was only a hot weather bird, and they would soon be rid of him on the burst of the rains.

I was happy to have destroyed this terrible man-eater, but I was happier still with the prospect of sport that awaited me on the morrow.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### BUFFALO HUNT ON THE PRANHITA RIVER.

Here on the Pranhita—meandering with serpentine course between rocky and forest-clad banks, divided into stretches of deep dark pools by numerous islands covered densely with evergreen *jumun* bushes and trees—some of the prettiest river scenery of the world reveals itself to the eye of the explorer of these remote regions.

During the terrific heat of the months of April and May, when nearly all the deciduous trees of the forests above are bereft of their clothing; when the pitiless rays of the fierce noon-day sun shine unchecked through their bare gaunt limbs, baking the ground once sheltered by their foliage, till the very atmosphere shimmers with the refraction; it is then that the cool and dark shade of the evergreens on the banks of these rivers and islands becomes the common sanctuary of the denizens of the jungles.

The tiger is on the *jumun*-covered islands, either asleep or panting near shallow pool shaded by over-hanging bushes; the cheetah is dosing on the leafy river banks, while the jungle-fowl and peafowl lie panting on their sides under the dark shade of matted bushes, occasionally scratching the cool damp earth lazily over their bodies. All Nature seems asleep, and an oppressive silence reigns under the fiercely scorching glare that shimmers at noontide over the whole.

At intervals the regular and metallic *kook ! kook ! kook ! kook !* of the little green Copper-smith bird resounds monotonously across the silent valley, as he clings at the very end of an upright branch, bobbing and swaying his little scarlet head—first to the right and then to the left—at the end of each note.

But deserted as these valleys seem at such times, there is yet something in the atmosphere of their surroundings which impresses the hunter with their lurking possibilities.

It is here also, in the deep dark pools—with only the tip of his nose out of the water—that the solitary wild buffalo disports himself. Now sinking altogether out of sight for fully five minutes at a time; then, as silently, coming to the surface again, followed

immediately by a loud snort, as he expels the vitiated air from his lungs, only to take another long breath, and again sink into the cool depths below. Thus the old bull passes the drowsy hours of the noonday sun, enjoying the undisturbed possession of any such haunt as he may appropriate, for not even a tiger will dare to provoke the rage of this fierce monster.

A buffalo of this description had taken up his quarters in and among the islands of the beautiful Pranhita river, between the small villages of Machheghatta and Bhoari. He ravaged the fields of the villagers at night, and attacked the fishermen on the river by day, up-setting the canoes of the latter and killing them in the water; he dug out of a shooting-pit two unfortunate native shikaris and gored them to death. He had been fired at time after time with no apparent result and was therefore considered bullet-proof, so the *pagal shaitan* (mad demon) of Bhoari came to be looked upon as supernatural, to interfere with whom was only to court disaster. Thus this fierce brute became one of the accepted evils of the locality, and such was the superstitious dread that he inspired among the natives that his very existence was carefully concealed from sportsmen, for fear the latter might endanger their lives by insisting on employing them in carrying out measures which they argued must inevitably fail.

After an exciting chase, I had succeeded in killing the man-eating tigress, much to the delight of the villagers who had accompanied me, who, after abusing the dead tigress and her ancestors in the usual manner, smoked the tobacco which I had given them, while I myself lay under a *jaman* bush with my pipe, enjoying myself in a similar manner.

It was an intensely hot day, and I was on the point of dosing off into sleep, when through my half-closed eyelids I saw a movement on the part of the men, which at once raised my curiosity. The smaller groups had now amalgamated into one large one; and the solemn nods and shakes showed that some weighty matter was being debated by these semi-naked jungle folk.

"You go Bhola—*jao, bhai, jao*" (go, brother, go), came the words when, apparently, a final decision had been arrived at. Thus exhorted, Bhola, their chosen spokesman, arose—*albeit*, somewhat unwillingly; and, standing for a while on one leg as he meditatively



scratched it with the horny sole of the other, listening over his shoulder to their final words of encouragement and advice, *he at last* made up his mind and approached me.

“ Ahem ”!

“ Who is it, and what do you want ”?

“ Mai hun, Mahraj.” (It is I, my lord.)

The usual indefinite answer which most natives give to this question.

“ Sahib,” gasped the old fellow in an awe-struck voice, “ Sahib, there is yet another *shaitan* in this locality, who lives in the form of an enormous *jungli-bhains* (wild buffalo) ”; he was fast losing his courage as he glanced in vain over his shoulder for the support of his companions.

I was fully aware of their firm belief in demonology, and of the weird encounters with demons which some of the more imaginative members of their community allege to have experienced ; so it was with a sceptical smile that I looked up and saw to my surprise that this was the same individual who had distinguished himself on that very day by throwing away his gun and diving into the river on the approach of the tigress, whom he had been instructed to “ stop.”

“ Good, oh *Dil-bahadur* (brave heart), do thou then go and fetch him here for my inspection.” This reference to his “ caution ” raised a laugh among his companions and put them into a good humour ; but the implied doubt as to the truth of his statement piqued the worthy Bhola, and caused him to wax eloquent.

Turning round, he appealed, with a wave of his arm, to his companions, who now crowded round, grinning and nodding to support him. “ Is it not true, what I say, brothers ? Has not this *shaitan* ravaged our fields, attacked our cattle and killed our folk, fishermen and shikaris alike ? Who now dares go into the jungles to collect fruit or honey, or to fish, as of yore, in the deep pools of the *naddi* (river) ? How many of our people are there who have not fled the old village ? Yes, our homes will become deserted ruins, for soon there will be none left to keep out the jungle. But the star of this Sahib is good, for has he not already rid us, without a single accident, of the cursed presence of the ‘ big cat ’ ; so it may be, brothers, that he may also rid us of our second curse, the Pagal Shaitan of Bohri, if we do but tell him of it ; and may the Bara Deo

(Great God) save me from the vengeance of this evil one, for I have spoken ! ”

I was much impressed with the earnestness of the old fellow's words accentuated as they were from time to time by a chorus of assents from his companions. So I no longer doubted that there was at least some truth in what they said.

On asking for proof, I was led by them to a spot half a mile further down the river, and there in the soft mud were the hoof-marks of what must have been a truly enormous buffalo, so large indeed that I could scarcely believe that they were those of a *babulus* at all.

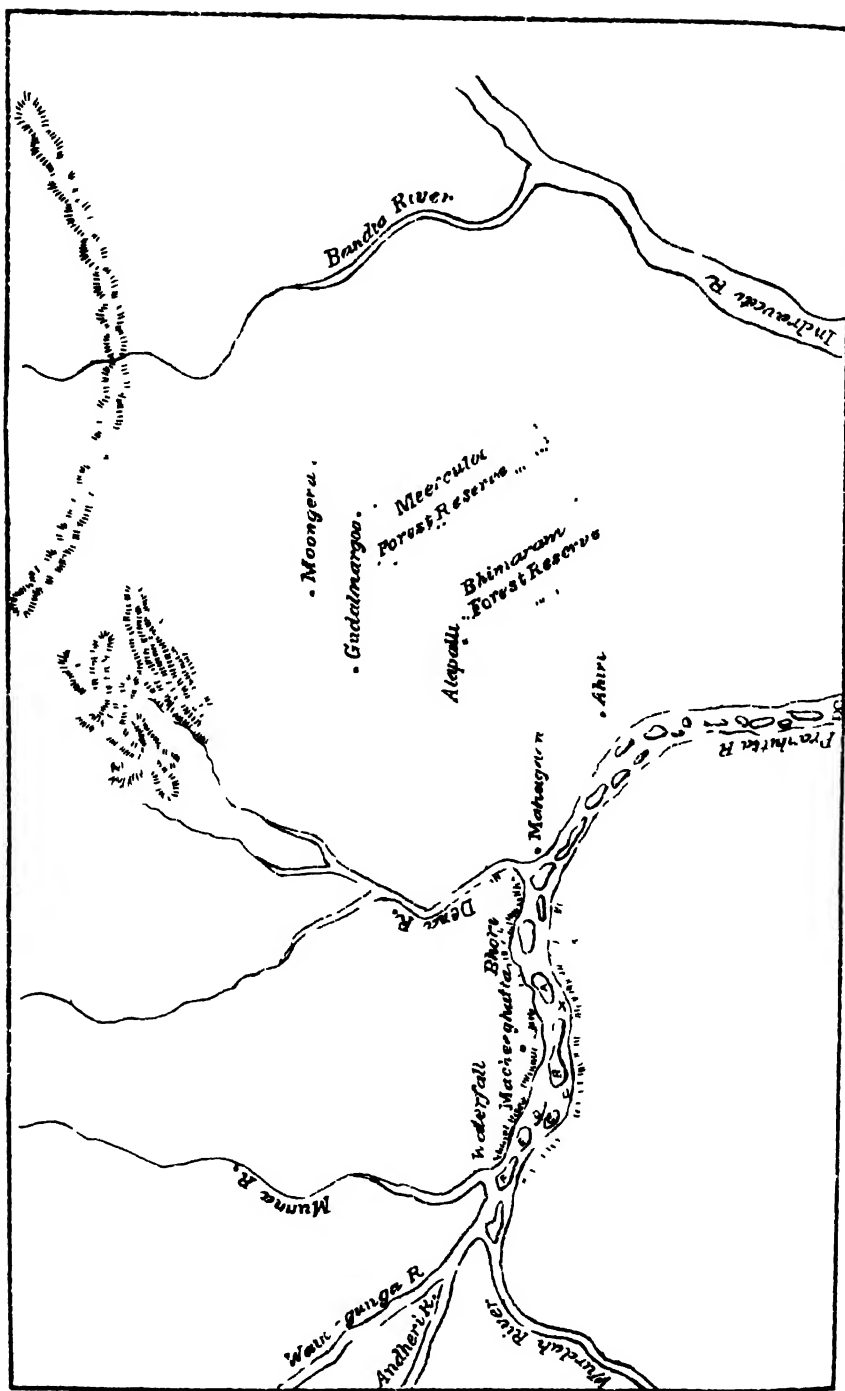
Here was indeed a prize worth more than any tiger living, and his habit of charging men at sight greatly increased my chance of bagging him ; so I was hugely delighted with my prospects when we quietly withdrew to consult our plans.

Being again gathered in council by the side of the dead tigress, I turned to my aboriginal friends for their advice. Bhola again spoke up : “ Khudawund ” (favoured of Heaven), said he, “ to-morrow at daybreak, two of our young men will proceed with the shikari to the river, and having located the evil one, two of them will keep a watch on his movements from trees, while the shikari will return to act as guide ; the remainder we will leave entirely to your Honour, whom Heaven help, for this evil one is bullet-proof.”

This was all very well, but what was to be done then ? Here was admittedly a very tough old monster, who was just as pugnacious in the water as he was out of it. He lived in, and among islands, which, though small, were densely covered with brushwood and grass, to follow him into which would be insane ; while to shoot him as he swam in the deep water channels that surrounded these islands would be equally futile as far as the securing of the grand trophy, which he was said to carry, was concerned, for if killed in this manner he would immediately sink, perhaps in fifty feet of water, only to be carried away by the current and never seen again. I had now to put on my considering cap and consider the means at my disposal.

I had with me a number of fireworks, including rockets, and these would be invaluable in forcing him to show himself, should he at any time be disposed to sulk in the dense cover of the island. There





were also a number of light swift canoes belonging to the villagers, in which they could easily avoid the buffalo when in the water, so they would serve excellently for scouts to work in while keeping a watch on his movements, but they were too fragile for me to use one of them myself, for the firing of a heavy rifle, while in one of them, would mean the certainty of being capsized, when I would be at the mercy of the amphibious monster.

As I had to be the aggressive party and expected to be met with equal aggressiveness, I required something far heavier for myself and the men that accompanied me, something which he would be unable to overturn.

A log raft would be too cumbersome and difficult to propel with paddles, where the water was too deep to allow the use of poles. So what was I to do.

At last an idea struck me, which eventually proved to answer my purpose very well. The villagers had also some large "dongas," or "dug-out" boats, hollowed, each from the single trunk of a tree. It was in one of these boats that the unfortunate fisherman had been surprised, overturned and killed in the water by this very buffalo only a short while before; so it would never do to employ them as they were.

My idea was to secure two of these long narrow boats, about five feet apart, by lashing two native cots across them, and then on the top of these again to build a stout platform of bamboos. As these boats stood fully eighteen inches above the water, the platform would be sufficiently clear of the surface not to impede the progress of the boats, but would at the same time render futile any attempt to capsize such a construction. In the accompanying illustration, the skeleton only is shown, in order to give the reader an idea as to how it was made.

Having decided on my plans for the morrow, we set off for camp with a light heart, taking with us in triumph the "big cat." At day-break next morning we were up, and within a couple of hours our novel raft was ready, and we had nothing to do but to await the return of Banroo, my shikari, who had gone to locate the position of the buff.

There apparently had been some difficulty, for it was not till 10 o'clock that Banroo turned up and reported that they had located

the buff, and that he had placed two men up trees to watch his movements while he returned to guide us to the scene. But as everything was in readiness, away we started as jolly as sand-boys, accompanied by quite a fleet of small canoes propelled by *dhecmers* (fishermen) who sang of weird folk-lore as they went.

In this manner we proceeded for about a mile and a half, when our guide enjoined strict silence, for we were nearing our destination. Thus we crept forward cautiously till we picked up one of the two look-out men, who then reported that the bull had moved further down the river, and that his companion had followed him, while he remained to give us the information. I saw at once, from the remains of a small fire here, that the reason why the bull had been disturbed was because the men had been smoking.

Having shipped the man, we then resumed our silent journey down the river. At length we heard a low whistle, and saw the second watcher hastily scramble down from a tree; on reaching us he whispered that the "evil one" had just entered the further of the two islands in front of us. He was still speaking, when I suddenly caught sight of the monster we were discussing, standing high and dry about 120 yards off; however, I did not care to risk a first shot at that distance, and in the meanwhile he disappeared into the grass behind him, apparently without having seen us.

The banks on either side of the river were of a considerable height from which a good view of the bed of the river could be obtained for a great distance, so unshipping some of the *dhecmers* I told them to post themselves along the top of these banks and to signal from thence any change which the buffalo might make in his quarters.

I then sent a number of the canoes to creep round on to the further side, hugging the left bank of the river and keeping, as they did so, the nearer of the two islands between themselves and the one on which he was reported to be; the remaining canoes spread out where they were, so that he was now completely surrounded on all sides. I then pushed forward on my raft with two men, and the fun was about to commence.

In spite of the silence with which we proceeded, the cunning beast had evidently become aware of our presence, and was on the watch

for us, for the moment we rounded the shoulder of the first island, there was a furious bellow of rage from the second, followed by a huge splash, as the monster jumped bodily into the water, and commenced to swim towards us. Ah! my friend, no innocent fishermen now at your small mercy to upset and kill. It was comical to see the look of surprise in the old fellow's face, when he realized that our structure was far too strong and heavy for him to overturn. He then tried to roar himself on to the raft, but having no purchase in the water, it was an easy matter for us to fend him off with our bambus. I would have tried to maim him by breaking one of his limbs, but that I was afraid the bullet would be deflected by the water to a vital spot, and thus accidentally kill him, and be lost to me in the manner before described, so we contented ourselves by raining blows on his head with our sticks, and shouting with laughter as he snorted with impotent rage round and round our improvised stronghold.

Of course I could have brained him time after time, or even blinded him with shot in both eyes, but it would hardly be "sport."

At last he gave us up in disgust, and swam off in a sulk to the island again; but just as he was scrambling out, two twelve-bore bullets crashed, with a resounding *thud! thud!* through his ribs, but he only responded with a flourish of his heels as he dashed out of sight into the thick scrub.

A few seconds later, one of the look-out men on top of the cliff signalled that he had left the island and had swum to another lower down. On our approaching this, the performance was repeated. Again he charged and swam out to meet us; again two more twelve-bore bullets crashed through his ribs, as he dashed back to his refuge, only to swim from the further side to another island. I was a young hand in those days and had not yet fully learnt where best to place my shots under different circumstances.

After this he sulked and refused to show himself or move on, until we resorted to rockets, when he again swam off to another island, giving me two more long shots at him, as he did so. Here, however, no amount of fireworks or rockets had any effect.

Thinking he might perhaps be dead, I looked round for an opening from which to reconnoitre, and at last found just what I wanted,







MEANING RESINFS.



and after me, as lively as a kitten. However, I won by a "length," and just reached the top of the rock, as the buffalo, in spite of his broken shoulder, reared himself up against the face of the rock and glared fiercely up at me with savage grunts and snorts; so close was he now that I could easily have touched him with my hand.

A valiant old rascal, he had made a brave struggle for his life, and now when finally brought to bay, he was still indomitable; so it was with compunction that I placed the muzzle of my rifle to the centre of his forehead and sent a bullet through his brain, to which he sank in a heap. Aye! a gallant old ruffian, indeed, who fell fighting to the last—a fitting end for the "Pagal Shaitan" of Bhoi who had so long terrorized the country.

As mentioned in the last chapter, the portion of my diary which contained the measurements of this old monster was destroyed, but though I cannot now say what his other dimensions were, it has been firmly impressed on my memory that his height at the shoulder was 6 feet 6 inches; he was the biggest buffalo I have ever shot, and the biggest I have ever seen, except the one of which an account is given elsewhere in this book, which was far larger than even this beast, and of course, like "the" fish, I did not get him.

Nevertheless, let the reader picture to himself a man 6 feet 6 inches in height standing by the side of an animal—an animal with short legs at that, whose shoulder reached to the top of that man's head—and then perhaps he will realize a bit better the enormous bulk of the animal. His vitality had been wonderful, for no less than 12 of my bullets (hardened 12-bore bullets, with 6 drams of powder) had struck him, besides which we took out nearly a double handful of older bullets, slugs, bits of nails, etc., etc., which we found encased in various parts of his body, having been fired at him by natives.

I gave the horns and skull of this bull to Captain Doveton, who was then my chief, and were, I believe, presented by him to the Nagpur Museum, where they probably are still. If the head of this buff is still there the bullet hole through the centre of the forehead will serve to identify it.

I will not attempt to depict the joy of the villagers at the final downfall of the last of their dreaded enemies. With some difficulty we dragged him down to the river's edge, and having firmly secured

him with ropes, and buoyed up with two large dry logs, we floated him off into the water. Many willing hands fastened themselves on to the ropes to help tow the fallen mighty ; while I myself lay back luxuriously on a soft bed of leaves and grass which had been spread for this purpose in the bottom of one of the larger *donga* boats, and was also towed.

Thus we proceeded up the river, first a group of canoes on the tow-ropes, then the half submerged buffalo, then myself, while some few odd *dongas* brought up the rear. The men were all in the highest of spirits, and sang songs of victory as they paddled ahead with towing-ropes attached.

It was now about 4 p. m. and the sun's great heat had greatly relented, and I felt supremely happy as I lent back and smoked on my comfortable lounge while my boat floated with a gentle ripple over the surface of the placid waters.

Each spot that we passed, as we wended our way homeward, had its own particular interest as having been the scene of some particular phase of that day's sport. The fiery sun sank lower and lower as we slowly proceeded, until it became a large red disc in a brazen western sky, casting fantastic reflections of the bare gaunt trees across our silvery way, while on the whispering wind came Nature's sigh of relief, as her children awoke and sallied forth once more.

The pea-fowl and jungle-fowl now came pattering down to drink but halted among the bushes as we hove in sight, the first peering inquisitively with elongated necks and jerky heads, while the other, the perky little jungle-cock, with puffed-out breast, eyed us with feigned contempt, with his head on one side, but nevertheless with one foot raised, ready to lead the retreat at the first alarm.

A herd of cheetle go helter skelter up the bank with their sharp and shrill alarm calls of *kew ! kew ! kew ! kew !* resounding in every direction. *Pundooop !*—it is only that fool of a black and white king-fisher again, diving into the water for the hundredth time without ever catching anything. It is a wonder what that bird lives on, certainly not fish ; but he deserves better luck poor fellow, for though quarrelsome and noisy in his lazy way, he nevertheless works very hard all day long in his futile work of catching nothing.

In the gathering gloom of the twilight, a little dark object darts swiftly past us over the water—it is the blue king-fisher (the same little chap as at Home), silently speeding his way to his retreat among the network of roots of some tree growing on the banks of the river—no fool this, for he rarely dives without coming up with a little bit of kicking silver in his mouth.

At last the twinkling lights of our camp fires come in sight, and then we haul the ponderous beast on shore. The jungle folk are going to have a rare feed off the enemy to-night, with a supplement of a certain stuff that is very dear to their hearts on such occasions.

Thus we will bid them good-bye—while I myself retired to sleep the sleep of the just that night—for had I not rid the countryfido of two terrible man-killers.

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### ADDENDUM.

In the chapter entitled "Rifles for Dangerous Game," it is demonstrated scientifically that the longer the axis of a projectile is in proportion to its diameter (*i.e.*, the more conical or elongated it is) the more liable it is to be deflected from its true course on meeting with an oblique resistance to its front-surface (which it is bound to meet in the body of an animal, such as the curved portion of a bone), being thus turned off into a line of least resistance probably in an undesirable direction, and without resistance such a bullet cannot obtain the desired expansion, so that such a projectile is most liable to: (*a*) deflect into a wrong direction such as the stomach, (*b*) not "set up" at all, but merely drill a small hole through and out of the animal. *Vice versa*: the shorter the axis is in proportion to the diameter, the less likely it is to be deflected either on the way to (such as by a twig or bamboo) or in the body of an animal; and the projectile that has the shortest possible axis not less than its diameter is the sphere. Hence of all shapes, the sphere is the least likely to be deflected on meeting with an oblique resistance, and so more likely to be

"resisted," and thus more likely to be expanded and so cause greater subsequent "resistance," "shock" and wider destruction of tissues; and without "resistance" there can be no "shock," as for example a hefty brick hurled into the bread-basket of a charging Ghazi at ten yards would give him a far greater "shock" because it is resisted, than would a Mauser pistol bullet in the same circumstances. Hence any given weight of lead can be best and safest employed as a projectile in spherical form only, for this obtains the maximum amount of resistance, expansion, shock and a wider destruction of tissues, and a minimum liability to deflection from its true course, both to and in the animal.

It has now been shown that for big and dangerous game in dense forest shooting, that a given weight of lead can be relied on to give the most destructive effect only when used in spherical form from a fire-arm. But the greatest drawback to using it in this form hitherto has been its inaccuracy of flight through the air to its mark. It is true that the perfect sphere is the only figure which in itself contains conditions necessary to true flight, namely, in which the centre of gravity coincides with the centre of its figure; but the regular production of the ideal sphere, perfect in sphericity and homogeneousness, is beyond human skill. Hence the centre of gravity of a spherical bullet might lie in any position in the barrel, and the direction of the force from the powder may pass to one side of the centre of gravity and so create a motion of rotation round the centre of gravity; and as the latter may be lying in any position in the barrel, there will be no knowing in which direction this "spin" may be taking place when the ball leaves the barrel, the bullet "drifting" to the right, left or up or down according to the direction of its accidental spin. Again the barrels of ordinary smooth-bores are not the same in diameter throughout their entire length, being relieved at both the breech and muzzles; hence there is bound to be windage or escape of gas and power, and consequent "spin" to the ball. Some of the patent spherical bullets now on the market alleging to overcome these difficulties are positively humorous in their impostures on the unreasoning and innocent credulity of sportsmen.

## BUFFALO HUNT ON THE PRANHITA RIVER.

The point of utmost importance to consider in regards to spherical bullets is the fact that they can touch the barrels only on their peripheries, and have no expansive base to prevent the inevitable windage. The author of this book overcame these difficulties satisfactorily for his practical requirements in dense forest shooting by using a stiff patch of greased cloth over the sphere; but his young hopeful, after various experiments, has lately evolved and patented the following bullet, which practical experiments show to possess all the advantages of the spherical bullet, with few of its disadvantages. It is as follows:—



THE "*Caped-spherical Bullet*" FOR SMOOTH-BORES AND RIFLES.

"A" is a solid soft-lead sphere; "B" is an inverted saucer-shaped attachment moulded with the solid sphere. The hollow inverted saucer is placed on the powder with only one thin paper wad between it and the powder; this paper wad is rammed very tight. On top of the sphere "A" is then placed a *thick felt* wad (the one usually used over the powder) and rammed very tight. The mouth of the paper cartridge is then turned down very tightly. Ramming the wads and turning-over *tightly* is for the purpose of obtaining greater gas pressure.

When a cartridge so made is fired, the explosion of the powder first forces the saucer-shaped cape "B" over the solid head "A" exactly as a man puts the cape of his great-coat over his head when it rains; thus instantaneously all of any space there may be between the periphery and the walls of the barrel is filled up, so that having now no outlet for escape the *whole* force of the explosion is compelled to act on the rear of the bullet; instead of the "windage" which invariably occurs with ordinary spherical bullets owing to the dimensions of the barrels in smooth-bores not being the same

throughout, causing the ball to "spin" and therefore "drift" in unknown directions. It is obvious also that it is impossible for a bullet of the shape of the "Caped-spherical Bullet" to turn over while in the barrel, so it can get no "spin" from the action of the explosion either, which ordinary spherical bullets must get owing to the human impossibility of constructing with certainty spherical bullets whose centre of gravity coincides with the centre of their figure. Our personal experiments also show that owing to the artificial regulation of its position while passing through the length of barrel, the "Caped-spherical Bullet" does not "spin" either during its flight through the air after leaving the barrel; for when fired into a perpendicular soft mud bank that will not spoil the shape of the bullet, and dug out carefully, it will be found that the *original base of the bullet is still to the rear.*

No spherical bullet hitherto has been able to attain these results, and the necessary effects on the accuracy of its flight, which are obvious; for it neither loses any of the force of the powder, nor "spins" either in the barrel or during its flight through the air up to about one hundred yards; we have not yet experimented with it at longer ranges.

It will be noticed that by using a sphere of a smaller gauge, such a bullet could be used with safety and equally good results from any choked-bore gun.

F. C. H.

*N B* —These patent bullets for smooth-bores and rifles (12 bores only at present) may be obtained through the author: Mr. F. C. Hicks, Mussoorie, India.

In quantity not less than fifty bullets at Rs. 6 per fifty, packing and postage charges extra.



# NOTICE.

ORDERS may also be registered with the Lawrence Asylum Press, Madras, for the following forthcoming books by Mr. H. W. Hicks, each priced at Rs. 5 per copy, per V.-P. P.; or, if beyond the reach the V.-P. system, the books when ready will be sent packing and postage free to any part of the world on receipt of a Money Order for the sum of eight shillings and sixpence for each copy :—

- (1) **“ Pig-sticking and Kindred Notes.”**
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No. (1) will be illustrated with some fifty original photographs taken on the pig-sticking field during a series of 12 week-end meets in which a total of 180 wild boars were speared, fought and killed, making the high average of 15 boars per week-end meet. Some of these Photos are probably quite unique, such as that of a wild boar's charge being taken on foot by sportsmen, one of whom (the author) the boar has just wounded and knocked down; another of a spearsman in full career on horse-back within a few feet of a wild boar who is fleeing for his life; and so on, all taken at close quarters in the field.

No. (2) will be illustrated throughout with foot-prints of wild animals; showing also how to distinguish between the various though similar groups of foot-prints, such as that of a pig from a goat; the hind foot-print of a tigress from the foot-print of a hyena, etc., etc.; the variations in the foot-prints of animals of different ages, sexes, hind-feet and fore-feet; when wounded, etc., etc. How foot-prints are placed at various speeds of motion, and what conclusions are to be arrived at from them. The characteristics in the grazing-trails of various animals, the variations in their manner of nipping off a green shoot for instance; their droppings, etc., etc.

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